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COMMENTARIES

ON THE

HISTORY OF ENGLAND

COMMENTARIES

ON THE

HISTORY OF ENGLAND

FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES TO 1865

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BY

MONTAGU BURROWS

CHICHELE PROFESSOR OF MODERN HISTORY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD, AND FELLOW OF ALL SOULS; CAPTAIN R.N.; F.S.A., ETC.; "OFFICIER DE L'INSTRUCTION PUBLIQUE," FRANCE

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PREFACE.

THE following pages are an attempt to interpret the History of England in accordance with the latest researches; they are a digest and a commentary rather than an abstract or an epitome. There is no want of historical manuals, but readers of history, and even professed students, are not always aware what great additions are being silently made year by year to the materials from which that history is compiled. A fresh collocation of facts thus becomes necessary from time to time, and the proportion which one set of facts was supposed to bear to another suffers a change which comes upon us almost by stealth. The fine monographs which have been composed upon particular persons, reigns, and periods do in fact tend to obscure this vital element of truth and proportion in the general history of the nation. Each has its day; but time alone can lodge it in its proper correlation with the rest,—often a very different place from that which was at first assigned to it.

These remarks do not apply in the same degree to English constitutional, or literary, or even economic history, concerning which sufficient guidance is available from recent books. It will be observed that the reader is supposed to be acquainted with one or more of the ordinary manuals, and thus to be able to dispense for the most part with references. It need hardly be said that he must not expect to find in so concise a work any attempt to record in detail

the facts of English History. Those which are best known and least disputed occupy in these pages the smallest space, but their proper place and due proportion to the whole are none the less indicated. To enable the student to grasp a large and difficult subject as a whole is one main object of the book.

It is possible that an independent digest of this kind may suggest that the time has come for a new and complete History of England, which might take, for the next generation, the place which was assigned in former days to Hume, and at the same time justify its pretensions on far superior grounds. But the time has not come. There is too much yet to be done in the way of research; and to appreciate the results of research requires time. Such a History must fill many volumes, and, if it is to live, must possess something of that perfection of style which was attained in the eighteenth century. We may well hope that, amongst our younger school of historians, some one will be found who is fitted to become the full and adequate interpreter of a History which grows in grandeur the more fully and dispassionately it is considered.

One of that younger school, and by no means the least accomplished—Mr Oman, Fellow of All Souls—deserves the best thanks of the writer for kindly looking over these pages before they were printed; and the Rev. L. F. Burrows has, with fraternal patience, corrected the proofs. But as the writer has not in all cases followed his advisers, it would be unfair of him to transfer his responsibilities to any one else.

OXFORD, *December* 1892.

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ERRATA.

P. 110, l. 29, *for* "formed" *read* "formal."
" 117, l. 34, *for* "1153" *read* "the same year."
" 186, heading of chapter, *for* "1378" *read* "1377."
" 229, heading of chapter, *for* "1485" *read* "1483."
" 244, l. 16, *after* "Charles" *insert* "VIII."
" 246, heading of chapter, *after* "Henry VII." *insert* "(1485–1509)."
" 254, l. 21, *for* "1536" *read* "1535."
" 260, heading of chapter, *for* "1538" *read* "1535."
" 269, heading of chapter, *for* "1536" *read* "1535."
" 314, l. 7, *for* "fiction" *read* "theory."
" 317, ll. 3 and 2 from bottom, erase "St John."
" 375, l. 3, *for* "Burnet" *read* "Dartmouth."
" 432, l. 3 from bottom, *for* "Abercrombie" *read* "Abercromby."

BOOK I.

FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES TO THE REIGN OF EDWARD I.

INTRODUCTORY.

THE arrangement of English history in three divisions, the second of which begins with Edward I. and the third with William III., will be found to have some advantages for a concise survey. As the subject broadens down to modern times, embracing millions instead of thousands, and the whole world instead of merely the "Narrow Seas," not only do facts enormously multiply, but they affect us in a different manner. We still follow the mighty events which shook the world in the last century as if we were ourselves concerned in them; but we have to stir up the antiquarianism and philosophy latent within our breasts before we can identify ourselves in any degree with the fathers of our race. A thousand years for the first of the divisions will therefore not really be disproportionate to the two hundred included in the third. The four centuries indeed allotted to the later Middle Ages, to the Tudors and the Stuarts, refuse to settle into quite the same space as the other divisions; but when we remember that the period covers the Reformation and the Great Rebellion, and thus affects all previous as well as all subsequent English history, we may be disposed to pardon a slight excess of the limits.

But however confined the space allotted to the early portion of the history of England, the period of the Roman occupation cannot possibly be omitted. Modern research has long been at work upon the Britons and their Imperial conquerors; and the late Mr Green's 'Making of England' has for the first time enabled us to take an intelligible view of the gradual settlement of the Teutonic tribes amongst those whom they found in the island. It is already an easier task to follow their movements than those of the American colonists. Yet perhaps we must admit that, except to the real antiquary, the period of settlement will still remain the least interesting part of the subject. Nevertheless the difficulties must be faced; and it may certainly be affirmed that the study, once begun, grows upon those who pursue it.

That the Norman Conquest does not here form the barrier between a first and second division may seem unnatural; but there is much to be said for including the two centuries of the Normans and their immediate successors along with the English and Danish reigns, for it is not till then that the effects of the Conquest fully disclose themselves, or that the people of the land—English, Danish, and Norman—are sufficiently welded together to take the place in Europe which fell to them in the fourteenth century.

CHAPTER I.

ETHNOLOGY: THE ROMANS IN BRITAIN.

THE people of Great Britain are not only composed of more various elements than any other in Europe, but those elements have been more gradually compounded, and ultimately more completely fused. That circumstance perhaps, considering what races formed the compound, is at the root of the position which they and their offshoots hold. Let us look, then, for a moment at this welding of races.

Some familiarity with the general ethnology of mankind

must be supposed; its successive waves of migration from East to West, and the general settlement of the European portion of the Aryan race, under its three divisions of Celt in the West, Teuton in the centre, and Slav in the East. These are the divisions still roughly represented on the Continent by France, Germany, and Russia. Some scanty fragments of a still earlier race, which may have been a portion of that designated in modern times as Turanian, were driven before the advancing Aryans into corners of Europe, where their descendants still exist, and amongst them were a certain people in this island who have been named "Ivernians." These seem to have already mingled with a still earlier race, the dwellers in caves, perhaps a neolithic people, but there is no record of their speech to guide us. The "Ivernians" are accredited to the bronze age, and were evidently wholly inferior to the Celtic invaders by whom they were driven over to Ireland: there, however, they turned on their pursuers, for they could go no further. Leaving, as far as we can ascertain, no mark in Britain, but mingling with the advancing Celts in Ireland or Erin, the land of the people of Er, they may well have given to the mixed race that special sprightliness, fervour, and wit which we find there, and nowhere else to the same extent.

The Celts who led the movement called themselves Goidels, and were succeeded and driven westward by another branch of the same race, the Brythons. Both of the Celtic branches were far in advance of the people of the bronze age. They used iron, lived in huts, and understood many of the arts of life. They were in short a fine race, akin to the Teutons. The gradual compression of population forced them to change from a nomadic to an agricultural people, and it was these whom the Romans found living in territorial divisions under kings. The Brythons or Britons occupied the more level and fertile parts of the island: the expelled Gaels (a corruption of Goidel) inhabited the mountainous west from north to south. The rough reception given to the Romans by these people, and the superior organisation of their forces, prove them to have been not only very powerful, but partially civilised, and connected by close communication with their kindred Celts in Gaul. Indeed, the aid afforded by the Britons to the Gauls in their struggles to

become independent of Rome was the real cause of the Roman conquest—not, as once used to be said, a mere childish ambition. They used boats, horses, and war-chariots. Two hundred years before Cunobelin (Shakespeare's Cymbeline), whose coins are familiar, they used money copied from Greek originals. The limits of their tribes should be gathered from the usual sources.

We must distinguish the Picts, the Scots, and the Kymry, of whom we do not hear till towards the end of the Roman occupation, from these original Celtic tribes. They were separate combinations of Celts, formed during the Roman period out of the larger body, and who were being developed as time went on into nationalities; the two first, uniting, became the Celtic people of Scotland, the last the dominant people of Wales. All through English history, at every national crisis, the differences between the contending portions of the English people have followed the lines of demarcation between the early Gaels and the Britons; and the people who have occupied the fertile and comparatively level territory of the latter have in the course of time absorbed those who have held the hilly and defensible country of the former.

It is unnecessary to state here the names and dates of the successive Roman conquerors of Britain, ending with Agricola, who in 78 A.D. (thirty-five years after the second invasion by Claudius Cæsar) conquered the whole island, up to the line of forts known as "Agricola's Wall." As a matter of fact, the first continuous wall across Britain was a later one, that of Hadrian, from Tyne to Solway. This is still one of the great sights of England, a military road, protected on both sides by fortifications. A garrison of 10,000 men quartered within this space, and in close connection with Eboracum (York), formed the centre of Rome's military system in the island. The relations of these two walls with those of Pius and Severus should be carefully noted; for the space between the north and south walls formed the Province of Valentia, and had a vast effect on the future of the island. Valentia included what we call the Scottish Lowlands as well as the county of Northumberland; and this ancient provincial arrangement led in after-times to the formation of the Northumbria of the Angles, as well as, later still, to that of medieval Scotland, the Highland

parts of which gradually coalesced with the already civilised Lowlands. We are still in ignorance concerning the other provincial divisions of Roman Britain, but much progress has been made in exploring the sites of the cities. It is enough here to observe that Colchester, built within the precincts of Cunobelin's British capital, the vast Camulodunum, was selected for the civil centre of Government, as Eboracum was for the military, and London, as the emporium of trade, for the centre of the grand road-system of Rome in Britain. Those roads deserve a careful study, for, like the cities, they are the basis of our own.

Under this wise organisation and the opportunities afforded by the Pax Romana, commerce and population grew rapidly. No portion of the vast empire was more prosperous. The superiority of the conquering race was so apparent that even the British language disappeared, at any rate from the towns, and Roman municipal institutions pushed aside the British customs. But the town system was too military to be planted deep in British life, and the natives lived chiefly in the country. The British people were in short cared for and governed for a purpose; they were not a people freely and spontaneously rooting themselves in a new social and political life. The Roman middle class, such as it was, scarcely existed. There were plenty of rich men, retired senators and successful merchants, plenty of fine ladies, plenty of slaves, but the Romano-British civilisation was an exotic. The people were Provincials, not Romans. This had a good deal to do with the inability of the British Celts to make permanent head against the Teutonic invaders; though none attempted to stand more manfully by Rome in its agony than the British. It took centuries to drive them into the old Gaelic territory, and from that, though gradually conquered, they were never dislodged. It was a very stubborn resistance, but a resistance in which the native slave population did not share like the rest.

We now know from widespread modern discoveries that there was a much greater intermingling of the British with the Teutons than used to be supposed; but this intermingling would not appear to have been with the higher class of Latin-speaking British, for if it had, we might expect to find more

traces of Latin in the early English speech, traces which are evident enough in the language of Wales, the country into which so many of the Romanised Britons were driven. It is again very doubtful whether any portion of the Roman municipal institutions passed into the system of the Teutonic invaders before their conversion to Christianity. They seem to have brought with them exactly what the Roman writers ascribe to the Germans in their continental life, and it is possible that the similarities to the Roman system, which we find amongst those invaders, may be simply attributable to the common parentage of the Aryan race; but it is probable that they received many social and political influences from the Roman ecclesiastics and continental traders of a later date. It would indeed seem that those of the Romanised British citizens who were not destroyed migrated to Brittany, Wales, and Cornwall; but on the whole we may be sure that the Celtic blood which mingled with that of the new English invaders can hardly but have left its mark on the compound. It was this no doubt which made the Jutes, Angles, and Saxons of England a different people from the Germans of the Continent. They certainly became so long before the Danish and Norman Conquests.

Perhaps also we may account for the suddenness of the conversion of the heathen Teutonic invaders by the familiarity with Christianity introduced through the British slave element. It was long in making its way, but after it was preached it often came up suddenly at last, at the first touch of the missionary ploughshare. We have no contemporary history of the time; but we do know that the Romano-British had accepted Christianity as early as most other people of the empire, and that its organisation was complete in the fourth century. The upper classes of those who retreated carried away with them to the west the clergy and the external emblems of their religion, but we need not suppose that the religion of those who submitted was altogether suppressed.

Passing over the history of the Imperial visits to Britain, and the usurpations of the Imperial purple growing out of the situation of the province, and omitting with especial reluctance the story of Carausius ("Caros, King of Ships"), so suggestive as to both the immediate and the distant future of the island, it may be well to take a glance at the changes

which came about in consequence of the departure of the Romans in the fifth century.

Three different portions of the inhabitants of the British Isles have been famous for painting their naked bodies: the Britons, who soon unlearned the practice under Roman influences; the Picts, who were Gaels of Galloway and the Highlands, and whose Latin nickname was given by the Romans; and the Scots, or painted men of Ireland, whose name had in their language much the same signification. From north-western Ireland these last migrated at the beginning of the fifth century to Cantyre and the islands of Argyle. The name disappeared in Ireland, where there were no contemptuous English to keep it up, but took root in what became by the thirteenth century "Scotland"; while in the same period the northern Picts, being absorbed by the later race, lost their nickname altogether, and the southern Picts were merged in the Kymry.

This, again, is a third assumed name, distinct, like those of the Picts and Scots, from tribal significance, and coming before us a little later. If Professor Rhys is right, they were a band of Romano-Britons who had served in the Roman armies, and who, after those armies had left the island, formed themselves into a league of "fellow-countrymen" or "Kymry," to resist the Teutonic invaders. Producing chiefs of mark, like Cunedda, they became the leaders of the legion-deserted natives, and a centre of refuge for the fugitives. They thus remained more British than Gaelic; but none the less were gradually driven, with their faces to the foe, into Wales and the Welsh border-land. Within the vast Welsh mountain fortresses the previous inhabitants became subject to, and merged in, the protecting military force, welded together by constant fighting. Here, as in a natural home, settled all the poetry, the religion, the literature of the race, and, it must be added, the hatred of the English which lasted for so many ages, and the indomitable spirit which has always coloured the history of Cambria, the country of the Kymry. The Arthurian legends embody a whole world of facts which have been lost to history in the haze of time, and form a poetry far from wholly fictitious. No wonder the inheritors of the old faith and the old civilisation looked down with bitter contempt on the invincible heathen, with

their barbarous habits and cruel gods. Wales linked itself with the Cornish Britons on the south, and with the Picts of Strathclyde in Cumbria and the north, forming a great western barrier to Teutonic progress which was broken up only by slow degrees.

The Angles of Northumbria were the first to break up the independence of Cumbria. The Saxon king, Athelstan, after a long interval, incorporated West Wales, or Cornwall, with England. Edward I. at last subjugated Wales. This word "Wales" gives us a fourth non-tribal or imposed name, —imposed by the Teuton invaders. As these people gradually settled down on their conquests they learnt to regard the independent British as Welsh or "foreigners," and their enemy accepted the name — the central portion of them being at first called Bret-Wealhs.

The above outline is the result of linguistic study by experts, and archæological research of inscriptions, tumuli, and other remains. There is no history of the time. The wailing jeremiad of the British monk, Gildas, alone unfolds to us the terrible picture of the state of Britain after the legions had gone. The so-called "Nennius" is a collection of Welsh traditions, most of them untrustworthy. Bede wrote two centuries later, and knew very little about the facts. The English or Saxon Chronicle was two centuries later still. The Roman writers are dumb, for they were more than occupied with their own miserable story.

Now for the most remarkable fact in literature. Six or seven hundred years after these events (in the twelfth century), Geoffrey of Monmouth, taking possession of the vacant waste of history, wrote a romantic book, founded on the current legends of the Borderland, which in an ignorant and illiterate age passed for what it pretended to be, the authentic history of England, retained that position almost unchallenged up to the eighteenth century, and will be found regarded as such by all the old writers. Few books have been more useful in stating the facts of modern research than Professor Rhys's 'Celtic Britain.'

The Roman period has been deliberately omitted of late years by many of the best writers of English history; but the constant discoveries of important Roman antiquities are producing an effect which cannot be any longer neglected.

The Teutonic invaders came into a great inheritance; we ought to know what it was, for it affected their whole career. The Romans had led the way in land-cultivation, in making roads, in building fortified cities, in draining marshes, in guarding the British seas, in establishing commerce, in the territorial divisions of the island. Much of this was lost in the bitter wars of the invading Teutons with the Britons, but much remained. The English mounted on the shoulders of their predecessors, and on that account, as well as by the infusion of Celtic blood, were a different people from what they would otherwise have been. The peculiarity of their career owes not a little to the circumstances of their infancy.

CHAPTER II.

THE TEUTONIC INVADERS.

It is very desirable to know all we can find out about the Britons and the Romans in Britain: it is vitally necessary to understand not only the history but the actual life of the Teutonic invaders from whom Englishmen derive their chief characteristics, and the largest portion of their blood. It is no mere antiquarianism which bids us go to Cæsar and Tacitus for the cradle-period of the people of England.

The fragments of this social life and of these native institutions are carefully put together in the second chapter of Bishop Stubbs's 'Constitutional History.' Having studied there the general character of the original people, their system of free government by National Councils, their land-system, the independence of separate households, the ranks of their society, the position of the chief and of his "company" as well as of the priesthood, the methods of local justice and administration, and the tribal organisation for war, and having observed how all these things reappear and expand when the invaders settle down upon their conquest of Britain, we may summarise the results under two heads: (1) We observe that the English are primarily descended from a warlike and

enterprising people, specially distinguished for their domestic civilisation, their passionate attachment to their "ham" or home, their respect for women, and their determination to carry with them, though not always or perhaps generally in their first movements, their whole family,—wives, children, and slaves. (2) That this people never thought of starting afresh on a new political or social system. Having long learnt the arts of self-government, developed from the Village to the Hundred, and thence to the Tribe, they merely carried further what they brought with them. And this was a local self-government of a remarkable kind, interpenetrated with, and subordinate to, the government of the whole Tribe to which each man belonged. They had already gone far to solve, and had only to develop further, the problem of problems,—how to unite individual freedom with general order. Thus, though fierce, savage, and cruel conquerors, their society carried within it the germs of permanence and true greatness.

Some familiarity with the geographical outline of the country in which the Low-Dutch, or German, tribes had been settled on the Continent before their invasion of Britain must be taken for granted; but at the very outset we must emphasise the important distinction between the limited emigration of the Jutes and Saxons, and the wholesale migration of the Angles. The first two tribes sent forth their superfluous population, the one from Jutland and the Danish islands to Kent, some of whom afterwards made their way to the Isle of Wight and Southampton Water; the other, starting from the flat shore which extended from the mouth of the Oder to that of the Rhine, sailed to the south and south-east of England, and do not seem to have been at all largely reinforced for many years. But the Engels or Angles, who came over from what we call Schleswig, bringing over, not indeed all at once, but by degrees, their whole tribe and all that belonged to them, burnt as it were their boats, left behind them in Germany no body of Engels, and took possession of the whole eastern coast of England, from the confines of Essex to the Firth of Forth.

Their acquisitions inland followed out this coast-line, and so, from the greater length of their territorial base, the area covered by this tribe came to exceed greatly that covered

by the rest. Hence, partly, the prevalence of the name "English" over "Saxon"; but the tribe had already before the invasion been recognised as superior to the others, and was sometimes spoken of as giving the name of its people to the whole of their nautical kinsmen. The accident of the Saxons producing a conqueror who founded a family of "kings of England," never even suggested a change of the name from "England" to "Saxony." The Saxons made amends on the Continent. The bulk of their tribe, which had been left behind, pushing out in all directions, became one of the five great tribal factors of German national life, and still holds its own. The Jutes who remained behind merged in the Danes.

The late Mr Green has called this settlement the "Making of England." We will follow the four stages which he has traced, and take in this chapter the first of them.

That first period embraces the "Conquest of the Saxon Shore" during the last half of the fifth century. Why did the Romans call the third of their great officers in Britain the "Count of the Saxon Shore"? It was because the Saxon tribe of nautical plunderers was the nearest both to the Romanised Gauls and to that part of the British coasts which extended from Norfolk to Sussex. This was the coast opposite to the Saxons, and so most open to their attacks. It was also the coast on which some of them had probably settled under the eye of these Counts, a species of admirals, who had fleets and garrisons of trained legionaries, or sea-soldiers, at nine different fortresses built for its protection, and who were also responsible for the safety and order of the adjacent seas. 449-500.

The nine stations were Brancaster guarding the Wash, Garianonum guarding the Yare, Othona the Essex inlets, Regulbium and Rutupiæ guarding the Wantsum (which was then the usual route to London from the south and east), Dubris, our Dover, which guarded the vulnerable spot over against Gaul, Stutfall Castle, which guarded the reclaimed portion of Romney Marsh, Anderida, known to us as Pevensey, which protected the eastern part of Sussex, and Portus Adurni, which is supposed to have guarded the western part. This last site is, like that of Othona, no longer discoverable; but all the rest are well known, and must be

carefully distinguished from such places as Canterbury, Rochester, Colchester, and London, which, strictly speaking, formed no part of the system of the "Saxon Shore," though useful enough, no doubt, in checking the advance of any invaders who might pass the coast-line.

But it is very remarkable that the Saxons, against whom these defences were designed, were not the first of the predatory tribes to attack the British coast after the withdrawal of the Count and his legionaries had invited them to the enterprise; and when they did move, it was not against the central and dominating portion. How was this? It may have been that they had for so long a period been restrained by the Roman organisation, and that the deserted Britons clung so closely to the fortresses that the Saxons had no heart for such an arduous enterprise; while the Jutes, by the accident of their employment in the service of a Kentish chief, had learnt the secret of British weakness, and in 449, headed by Hengist and Horsa (names by no means certainly fabulous), made the successful settlement which led to their conquest of Kent. Britain was not destined to fall into the less noble keeping of the Celtic Picts and Scots, who were working their savage will in predatory attacks throughout the whole interior, but to be the central home of the English tribes, with their long-descended Teutonic education. The battle of Aylesford, in 455, signalised the Jutish superiority; that of Wippedsfleot, in 465, established it. The great Roman fortresses of Rutupiæ and Regulbium fell into their hands, and formed, along with Dover, and with Canterbury as capital, the nucleus of a new kingdom of East Kent; while Rochester became the capital of West Kent, and secured the navigation of the Thames and Medway.

The ealdormen who led the invaders mounted to kingship in these wars, and Kent again assumed its already old position as leading province of the island. Julius Cæsar found its people the most civilised; the communication which it almost monopolised with the Continent in Roman times kept it to the front: it now became the *tribus prerogativa* by right of first settlement and first conversion to Christianity. Though from its limited area it failed to take the place attained by Wessex, Mercia, or Northumbria, its material advantages, its compact formation, and its traditions, made

it for some centuries almost their equal in political power. It was for ages the centre of the nautical life of England, and, next to London, of its commerce. Later on, the unification of the kingdom, reducing, as it did, all petty kingdoms to the rank of shires, once more gave high relative rank to a shire which had been as a kingdom unique: at every crisis of English history Kent "Invicta" led the van of constitutional progress; as respects cultivation it became the "garden of England"; and the clearing away of its wild Andredweald gave it a fresh population to make up for the loss it suffered in the fifteenth century by the decay of the Cinque Ports.

A generation later Ælla[1] headed the Saxons in their emigration to what they called South Saxony or Sussex; but besides their successful landing at Selsey in 477, and their capture of Anderida in 491, we know no more of their movements. At the latter place they "slew all that were therein, nor was there henceforth one Briton left." No ruins in England tell a more instructive tale than those of Pevensey. But the Saxon Hæstinga of the Continent, moving somewhat later, adopted instead of Pevensey an adjacent harbour which they called Hastings, and in the course of two centuries that famous port and its Sussex subordinates became important enough to confederate with those of Kent. South Saxony was not capable of expansion into an important kingdom, for the Andredweald, which occupied half Kent, pressed down along the whole width of the district, and confined the settlers to the space between the Sussex Downs and the coast. Some of the Saxons, about the same time, settled in East Saxony or Essex, but we know not even one of the details of the process. They also were stopped by forests, and still more by fens; and when they formed the colony of Middlesex in the next century, it was already circumscribed by other settlements. Thus we perceive how it was that there was little encouragement to those members of the tribe who did not form part of the early emigration to join their more adventurous brethren; nor when the larger movement of the Gewissas or West Saxons began in 495 did the strenuous resistance they encountered tempt a migration *en masse* from a people now scattered over a wide extent of shore.

[1] The antique spelling is only used in these pages where the familiar custom of centuries has not made its adoption pedantic.

It was different with the Angles, who were in a more confined territory. We have no record of their invasion, but there is every reason to believe that it took place towards the end of the fifth century, about the same time as that of the Gewissas, and we know that they made their descent upon the northern portion of the "Saxon Shore," where they became "North folk" and "South folk." Here they met with stubborn resistance from the Britons, as we discover by the crowded character of the Hundreds, or divisions of the kingdom, which they formed. The large tracts of coast to the northward were not assailed before 500 A.D.

The loss of the "Saxon Shore" by the settlement of Jutes, Saxons, and Angles was not so great an injury to the British as it might seem. They could no longer hope for aid from Gaul, already conquered by kindred tribes of Teutons,—Franks, Burgundians, and Visigoths. There are no more "groans of the Britons," such as Gildas designates their letter to Aetius. They had to trust to their own resources, and, retreating from the eastern coasts, began to make more or less effective combinations within their now restricted bounds.

In other words, beaten in almost every engagement, and the great fortresses destroyed, the Britons began to "exterminate" themselves—that is, to retreat beyond the *termini* of the settlements of their enemy, which were bounded by sea, forest, and fen. This is the sense in which the word is used by Gildas and Bede. They were not exterminated in the sense of being destroyed. "They fled from the English like fire." At Anderida, indeed, and later at Chester, we hear of indiscriminate massacre; but we have no reason to think it was the rule. It was not till nearly a century had elapsed, till the invaders had been reinforced by a succession of enterprising chiefs, and had begun to multiply in their first settlements, that they made real progress from the "Saxon Shore" to the interior of the island. Their first care had naturally been to intrench themselves in islands and peninsulas—Thanet, Sheppey, Wight, Selsey, and Hurst. Soon the rivers and estuaries began to form the chief division between bands of settlers. They then commenced the struggle with one another which formed the kingdoms of the Heptarchy.

Thus ends the first of the four periods into which Mr

Green has divided the "Making of England." It may be convenient to give here a synopsis of the four periods :—

(1) The Conquest of the "Saxon Shore," begun in the centre of that shore by the Jutes under Hengist and Horsa from Ebbsfleot ; continued on their northern boundary by the East Saxons, and on their southern by the South Saxons ; and completed by the Angles in Norfolk and Suffolk. 449–500.

(2) The Conquest by the Angles of the eastern coast of England up to the Forth, and by the West Saxons of the southern coast and the interior up to the Thames, till they became conterminous with the Jutes in Surrey and the Angles in Mid-Britain. By the time that the battle of Dyrham, in 577, gave the courses of the Severn and Thames to the West Saxons, half Britain remained with the invaders. 500–577.

(3) The formation of the Heptarchy, ending in what may be called the "Triarchy" of Northumbria, Wessex, and Mercia. It includes the Mission of St Augustine in 596. The battle of Chester, in 613, gave Northumbria precedence over the rest. 577–613.

(4) The threefold division of England, or the "Triarchy," each of them in turn taking the lead, till Egbert raised Wessex in 829 to the permanent headship, and "England was made." All the changes in this period were influenced by the Celtic and Roman conversions of the invaders to Christianity. 613–829.

(5) We shall take the history of England from Egbert to Edward the Confessor as a fifth period, embracing the reigns of splendid English sovereigns, and exhibiting the union of Church and State on a basis which gave many elements of strength to the England of subsequent times. Mr Green has applied to this period the name "Conquest of England." We shall see that it is best to apply that term only to the short period of Sweyn and Cnut, a little before the Norman Conquest. 829–1065.

CHAPTER III.

THE SETTLEMENT: THE HEPTARCHY.

THE second, third, and fourth stages of the Settlement may
500-577. be summed up in another form. In the second stage of the Teutonic movement, as in the first, the invaders still shun contact with one another, and by mutual consent employ their ferocious energy in warfare with the different British tribes amongst whom they were settling down. By the year 577 (the end of this period), the Angles have thrown themselves bodily on the east coast of Britain, and extended their conquests to the middle of the island; the West Saxons have advanced northwards from Southampton Water, on which their South-hame-town is situated, and taken possession of the Lower Severn and Upper Thames. The three great tribes then find themselves inevitably involved in a fierce struggle for boundaries with one another. That
577-613. commences the third stage, during which is formed out of the general conflict the Heptarchy or Octarchy, into which
613-829. the tribes come to be divided. In the fourth stage, these merge, as we have said, in a sort of Triarchy, which brings England a step nearer to unity; and the ecclesiastical strife, resulting from the introduction of Christianity by two distinct channels, results in the triumph of the Roman system under Archbishop Theodore, which leads the way directly to the unification of the whole body of Teutonic settlers.

We have no definite account of the Angle movement in the second period till, long afterwards, Bede breaks the silence with the oracular statement: "In the year 547, Ida began to reign; from him the Royal family of Northumbria had its beginning." This statement postulates a previous invasion, conquest, and settlement. Bamborough Castle was the centre of this kingdom of Brynech or Bernicia. In founding it, the Angles encountered a determined opposition at the hands of a British chief named Arthur. Whether he is the same as the Arthur of south-western Britain, or whether the exploits of one have been transferred by legend to the other, is still under dispute. There is some reason

to think that even at the beginning of the century an Angle occupation was effected at the extreme northern limit ever reached by them, the Firth of Forth; but all this is as yet exceedingly obscure.

Mr Green has ranked the Angle or English conquests of the interior in the following order, under the headings of East English, Middle English, and West English: (1) That of Lindsey or Lincolnshire, with Lincoln for capital. (2) Deira (attacked from the Humber), or the Yorkshire wolds (the East Riding), of which Weighton was capital. (3) Yorkshire proper, with York (Eorwic) for capital. (4) North Britain, or the Lothians, which some think was the first—at any rate it was there that the people were accustomed to speak the purest English. All these invaders belonged to the eastern wing of the later movement, and must not be confused with the earlier East-English of Norfolk and Suffolk, whose lands were always known as East Anglia. Then (5) came the settlement of the Middle English in the valley of the Trent, including the Peak moorlands, and Needwood and Sherwood Forests, with Leicester for capital. (6) The Middle English received the accession of Northamptonshire, which was conquered by the Angle Gyrwas or Fen-dwellers, with the North-hame-town for capital. They had been hitherto impeded by the great Rockingham Forest. Lastly (7), the West-English formed the commencement of Mercia by swarming into the March or Border-land between the Middle English and the Welsh, with Lichfield for capital.

These almost isolated movements owed their slow and gradual character to the difficulties presented by the undrained forests and fens. The different sections of Angles and British alike found it impossible to unite for attack or defence. This also helps to explain the permanence of linguistic types, and the identity of English institutions with those brought from the Continent. Generations grew up on the foreign soil, and expanded from centres of settled communities, only a little influenced by the presence of their British slaves. How different from the fate of the Roman Provinces on the Continent! There the masses of Romanised Celts, scarcely resisting the foe, simply opened for a moment to the barbaric sword of the Teutons, and let

the savage, half-Christian, warriors into their ranks. Thus the Teutonic conquerors were enclosed on all sides; the languages of Germany were forgotten by the ruling race, and an imperfect form of faith was at once absorbed into the orthodox system of Rome.

As to the West Saxons, or Gewissas, so vigorous was the British defence that Cerdic, and Cynric his son, made little impression for twenty years. Not till 514 did the plunder-raid turn into a sustained expedition, which for a time was successful, and was signalised by the victory of Charford (Cerdicsford); but the Saxons could not break through the forest districts west of the Avon, which formed the outwork of the British forces, now marshalled in full strength under, according to the legend, the glorious King Arthur. At Mount Badon (Badbury) (520) the invaders were certainly defeated by the Welsh of Devon, and held at bay in that direction for half a century. It has been surmised that a monastery at Amesbury, or the memory of some great chief buried at Stonehenge, may have inspirited the defence. The Jutes, who had joined the Saxons in this movement, fell back, and conquered the Isle of Wight. They left behind a part of their host in the Meonwaras of Hants, while the Saxons rallied round their home-town, Southampton. They had not only been defeated in battle; they had been headed back by the great fortresses, Sorbiodunum and Calleva (Old Sarum and Silchester), nor was the former taken till 534 by Cynric, having, with its gigantic works a hundred feet high, resisted to the last. That capture placed the Saxons in the valley of the Thames, as well as in Wiltshire, and enabled them to join hands with the Middle Saxons north of London. Soon afterwards they settled at Reading. Thus the southern uplands were turned, and the ways opened for the Saxons to the whole island. London, indeed, defended by its marshes rather than its walls, retained its independence till *c.* 600. Bede speaks of it as the ecclesiastical capital of Essex.

It is towards the end of this second period that Calleva Atrebatum, or Silchester, having been at last taken, the Gewissas came face to face with the youthful Ethelbert, King of Kent, and drove him back at Wimbledon (568). That battle decided the fate of Surrey, which was henceforth a

Saxon district. But Ceaulin, their leader, found he could make no further progress to the east. The powerful Angles had rectified their frontier with Essex, and the West Saxons turned once more to the west. In the great battle of Deorham or Dyrham (near Bath), in 577, they slew three British kings, and they won three great Romano-British towns—Gloucester, Cirencester, and Bath. This important conquest drove a wedge in between the two chief divisions of the Welsh people. Those of Devon, Cornwall, and Somerset were now called by the Saxons West Welsh, those of Wales and the Midlands simply Welsh. Thus, of course, to the Welsh the Teutonic invaders were "Saxons," and so they remained; and from them the designation was passed on to the kindred Celts who lived to the north, even though those tribes were in contact not with Saxons but with Englishmen. What we call the western counties were conquered by Saxon offshoots hungering for fresh land—the Hwiccas in Gloucestershire, the Magesætas in Herefordshire and Shropshire.

All the best part of England was now won; but except in the actual valley of the Severn, the Hundreds in the West are far larger than in the early settlements, showing that the conquered British of these parts were received to terms; and it is now known that many were not only kept as slaves, but remained as occupiers of land paying rent.

In the third stage the struggle of the conquerors amongst themselves for the interior and better part of the country is marked by a new circumstance arising out of this position. Alliances are now made by the different new kingdoms just formed with the bodies of Welsh who had submitted, but who soon discovered that they were in a position to make their own terms out of the conflict. They lay between the unconquered Welsh on the west and the Mercian (march, or border) Angles, along with the West Saxons, on the east. Hence the rise of Mercia into a separate kingdom. The Angles, Saxons, and Mercians, it should be observed, alone had a future, for they had room to expand; the others—Kent, Sussex, Essex, and East Anglia—had reached their limits in the second stage, but were still kingdoms. 577–613.

The second and third periods have been more confused than they should have been in consequence of a mistaken use of the term "Bretwalda." Many untenable theories

have been held as to the early English settlements, in consequence of the neglect to observe that it is not a contemporary word. It is first used in the Chronicle to designate Egbert as the eighth Bretwalda, or "ruler over Britain," and thus to enhance the glory of the Wessex kings descended from him. The writer professed to be following Bede in so doing, but Bede never uses the word. He does indeed speak of the seven chief rulers of the Heptarchy as holding *imperium* over the rest, but only over their fellow-settlers. There was never, in short, such a thing as a compact Heptarchy, governed in turn by these seven chief rulers. That idea arose from a mistaken interpretation of the authorities; but there were, between 477 and the end of the seventh century, when Bede wrote, seven kingdoms, each of which had a more or less continuous history, and in some of which a king greater than his fellows had arisen. Bede's own word for the position is *ducatus*—the command of a *dux* or general. These were: (1) Ælla, the South Saxon, who, says Bede, "first exercised a supremacy of this sort," the sort exercised, as the context shows, by Ethelbert of Kent, whose supremacy he is describing. This rule of Ælla could only apply to the supremacy over the Jutish Caintwaras. (2) Ceaulin, the West Saxon, is the next chief named, his claim being represented by his victories over the youthful Ethelbert of Kent, and over the Britons of the west. (3) Ethelbert himself is the third, who in his manhood established the power of Kent over the East, South, and a portion of the West, Saxons. (4) Redwald of East Anglia is the fourth. The fifth, sixth, and seventh are the three successive kings of Northumbria—Edwin, Oswald, and Oswy. Finally, all but the first and second of the seven owed their position more or less to their relations with the new factor in politics and society, Christianity: Ælla and Ceaulin belonged to the days of heathenism.

Of Ælla's supremacy we know nothing but the fact, as stated by Bede; it could hardly but be transient. We have more to say about that of Ceaulin. His conquering career was brought to a close by the failure of his second attempt to extend the dominion of his tribe in the West, just as he seemed about to place Wessex at a leap where Egbert placed it two centuries later. But the Hwiccas, an offshoot of his

own people, under Ceol his own nephew, revolted, and defeated him at Wadborough in 591, after he had already suffered a defeat from the British at Faddiley, supposed to be near Nantwich; and Wessex was thus thrown back from the place she had prematurely won. The British, after this battle, became, and remained, recognised States in the west, but they could never recover the united front which Ceaulin had broken up; while at the same time the weakened condition of Wessex itself brought Ethelbert, whom it had formerly subdued, to the front.

The marriage of Ethelbert with Bertha, daughter of Charibert, king of the Franks, renewed his ambition. It also renewed the link between England and the Continent, which the departure of the Romans had snapped, and led the way to the landing of St Augustine in 596, and to his success in the wholesale conversion of the king and his people. Before their arrival Ethelbert had found his opportunity, and formed his *imperium*, as Bede tells us, "along the east coast, as far as the banks of the Humber." Thus the chief missionary of Rome presented himself before the man who was at the time the chief king of the English. Long before this, however, St Columba had formed his missionary centre in Iona (565), from whence the work had been already extended over the west of North Britain. We shall presently note its progress.

The story of Pope Gregory I. and the English child-slaves at Rome, as the impelling cause of the Mission of St Augustine, fits in with the contemporary history of the two portions of Northumbria, and to this we must attend before we go further. Ælla of Deira (the East Riding of Yorkshire) had captured these children amongst others, during his attempt to unite his kingdom with that of Bernicia; but at his death Æthelric of Bernicia united the two kingdoms from the north: and his northern kingdom, Bernicia, retaining on the whole its superiority under that union, soon obtained the name of "Northumbria." From this basis, he and his son subdued the Kymry, both of Cumbria and of Elmet and Loidis (the West Riding and Leeds); driving those who did not submit to the Welsh mountains for safety. It fell, however, to Æthelfrith, son of Æthelric, who became King of Northumbria in 593,

to complete the work, and to break down (in 603) the great Celtic confederacy of the west, which was now ranged around the Scots of Dalriada. These Scots had recently come over from Ireland in force, and the confederacy gathered round Ædhan, already a Christian king of the Scots, who had been converted by the monks of Iona. They were conquered in a great battle at Dagsastan (possibly Dalston, near Carlisle). In 613, Æthelfrith won another great battle at Chester (Deva), which completed the overthrow of the kingdom of Strathclyde. The Kymry of Wales were now quite separated from their northern brethren, and were fatally weakened. It was in this second battle that the British monks of Bangor-ys-coed (on the Dee, twelve miles from Chester) were ruthlessly slain by Æthelfrith's order, since, though unarmed, they were, he said, acting as open enemies. Thus the Northumbrians found themselves brought round, past the English March, into the Midlands between Trent and Severn.

Ethelbert, to whom we return, lived nearly twenty years after he became a Christian, and extended Christian influences beyond his own kingdom into Essex, the capital of which, London, received Mellitus (604) as Bishop, while Rochester received Justus; but Ethelbert's death in 616 broke up the Roman Mission. Everything now seemed to go against it. Redwald, King of East Anglia, had become only a half-Christian, and the *ducatus* or leadership he exercised before Ethelbert died was transient. The two young kings of Essex apostatised, as did Ethelbert's own son Eadbald. On this, Bishops Mellitus and Justus fled from their sees, and Kent ceased for a time to carry weight amongst English States.

In connection with Redwald's supremacy we have the story of the fugitive Edwin, son of Ælla of Deira, whom Redwald protected, and whom the Roman Paulinus so strongly influenced during exile as to secure him for a fellow-worker in planting Christianity at York. The opportunity was given by Redwald's victory over the Northumbrians on the river Idle, near Retford (626), in which the winner of great victories, Æthelfrith, was slain. Edwin, by Redwald's help, now recovered Northumbria, and again represented the blood of Ælla of Deira on the throne of the

united kingdom. This battle of the Idle was the second great battle between English powers of the first rank, as that of Wimbledon, between Ceaulin and Ethelbert, had been the first. Edwin's Northumbria now became the meeting-place of the two streams of Christianity, the one from Rome, the other from Iona; but Paulinus only for a short time retained the position at the northern Court which had been won by him at first for Rome.

CHAPTER IV.

THE "TRIARCHY."

THE conversion of the English to Christianity is of course the central point of their early history. It came soon enough to affect their whole life and institutions. The peculiar form of its after-development did indeed lay England open to the incursions of the Danes; but the unification of the realm was powerfully assisted by the turn it took. We no longer speak of the Mission of St Augustine in 596 as the first introduction of Christianity to Britain after the departure of the Roman legions, or regard it as anything but one factor out of many in the conversion of its inhabitants. We have seen St Columba had already begun his work in the North, and the machinery he created was so powerful that, though it began to operate on the English themselves a little later than the Roman Mission, it was the means of converting a far larger portion of them. It was the accident of Archbishop Theodore's appointment which secured before the end of the seventh century the final triumph for Rome, and the unjust fame of an exclusive work of conversion. Bede wrote not long after that event, his pen dipped in Roman colours; but yet he was so intimately connected with the Celtic Mission, to which Northumbria owed its institutions, that he could not help noticing them. He is, however, far from a sufficient authority for that part of the subject, and his admirable books require to be supplemented from other sources.

Again, St Columba's movement must not be regarded as isolated; it was the outcome of the Celtic Christianity of the West. The Churches of Armorica or Brittany, of Devon and Cornwall, of Wales, of Strathclyde, and of Ireland, were all intimately connected. They had not only ancient rites and customs in common, different from those of Rome, such as the time of keeping Easter, and, with almost equal prevalence, the form of tonsure, but they developed a monastic system in which the abbots became the practical rulers of the Church. The bishops were subordinate to these abbots, yet were alone able to ordain, and to convey a succession. It might be called a missionary-bishop system, the monasteries retaining the lands which had been granted to, and settled by, them. This had probably obtained also at first in Wales, but the British had carried with them a diocesan organisation from the old Romanised provinces, and, between the years 500 and 560, established, in addition to the ancient see of Caerleon upon Usk, the four territorial bishoprics of Llandaff, Bangor, Menevia or St David's, and St Asaph. In Cornwall the bishops retained their non-territorial character down to a much later date; and when Celtic fugitives planted Christianity in Ireland, the Celtic ecclesiastical system, coinciding with the Celtic tribal system and with the deep-rooted spirit of clanship in that island, took root. From Ireland it was brought to North Britain by Columba.[1] Hence the wide and rapid spread of the Scoto-Irish, Cornish, and, speaking generally, Celtic system, under Columba's influence. It was locally the older, more accustomed, ancestral form. Hence it is easy to understand the refusal of the Welsh or British bishops to work with St Augustine, for which they have been unduly blamed. Their missionary enterprises, such as they were, had a sufficiently large sphere, and it was a duty to protect their own work in Wales from the intrusion of strangers. Incessant conflict with the invaders was still raging. How could they possibly undertake as yet their evangelisation?

Thus the success of Columba and his disciples in the greater island does not seem to be the mere result of their particular excellence. The almost perfect missionaries who

[1] The work of St Patrick appears to have been based on a work already commenced. It is remarkable that Bede never mentions him.

went forth from Iona may be regarded as the product of an old and wide Christian culture. Thus also, in the course of only two generations, they had become the fit agents for the evangelisation of the rude English, who had presented to the Roman Mission almost insuperable difficulties. When the work had been done ready to its hand Rome came on the scene. As a matter of fact, the Roman Mission has only Kent to boast of, and to some extent East Anglia and Wessex—two or three at most out of the seven or eight States of the Heptarchy. The rest were either entirely converted from Iona, Lindisfarne, and Ireland, or else fell to missions from those centres after the Roman missions had failed.

Yet it is easy to see how it was that the Romish Church now gradually absorbed the Celtic, and took possession of the land. London and the seaports of the south-east coast gave it a permanent footing, and an intimate connection with a great ecclesiastical centre. Its superior organisation supplied the rest. It should also be noticed that the Celtic missions appealed to the Angles in a different way from the Roman. The Angles were won by the earnest simplicity of the monks planted in their midst, and by their appeals to the heart and life, rather than by the more authoritative methods of the Romans, which were successful with the chiefs and upper classes of the more cultivated people of the south. In such matters the Saxons and South-English were aristocratic, or at any rate it was that element which secured permanency.

The formation of the "Triarchy" is bound up with the reigns of Edwin and his two successors, Oswald and Oswy, in Northumbria. These are the three last of Bede's holders of "Empire," or leadership, over the rest, called by the Chronicle "Bretwaldas." Edwin's conquests were in the following order: (1) the British territories of Elmet and Loidis, which make up the West Riding of Yorkshire; (2) the consolidation of his northern dominion by the building of Edwin's Burgh or Edinburgh; next (3), starting from the basis afforded by the previous acquisition of Chester,—the Isles of Anglesey and Man; next (4), upon Redwald's death, the supremacy over the Angle tribes of Mid-Britain; next (5) came the connection with Kent (though not the over-

617-633. 634-642. 642-670.

lordship of it), by Edwin's marriage with Ethelburga, granddaughter of Ethelbert and daughter of Eadbald his son; and finally (6), his struggle with Wessex, which ended in its subjection. The greatness of Northumbria culminated in Edwin; and it is now that we hear from Bede of his assumption at York of the old Roman insignia of "Empire."

Urged by Paulinus, Edwin's own province of Deira threw off heathenism; but not so Bernicia, or the rest of the Angle lands. A time of reaction and distress was at hand, which, however, like a pruning-knife, sternly corrected a too rapid and unwholesome growth. The trouble came from two quarters,—from Penda, the heathen King of Mercia, who had already, in alliance with the Hwiccas, defeated the West Saxons at Cirencester, and from Cadwallon the Briton. Round Penda rallied the heathen and recalcitrant Angles; round Cadwallon, King of Gwynnedh or North Wales, the many broken tribes of desperate Britons. Together they destroyed, at Hatfield Chase in Yorkshire (633), Edwin and his Christian forces. Upon this, Paulinus, after an eight years' mission, taking charge of Edwin's wife and of his daughter Eanfled, the founder of Folkestone nunnery, fled to Kent, just as Mellitus and Justus had fled from their bishoprics on the death of Ethelbert. "Penda and Cadwallon laid waste the whole country of the Northumbrians," says the Chronicle, "sparing neither age nor sex." The former of these chiefs now conquered East Anglia, taking advantage of the incompetence of Sigebert, its monastic king, who, refusing to fight, was forced to the head of his people, armed with a staff, and soon met his death. The weak part of early English Christianity was thus already prominent. A far higher type of man was at hand to represent the better side of the English religion and character, St Oswald, son of the long-victorious Æthelfrith, who had been at last conquered by Edwin.

During Edwin's reign, Oswald, along with some dozen young nobles of Bernicia, had taken shelter from the hostility of the Deiran king at Iona. There he had been fortunate enough to receive the full training of St Columba's monastery. It was then at its prime; for its success in converting both the northern and southern Picts had by this time made it an object of the deepest reverence both in the

Highlands and Islands of Scotland. After the death of Edwin and of his own apostate brothers, Oswald came to the front, no unkingly monk, no effeminate scholar—a king, a warrior, and a saint. He soon recovered Northumbria, and at once sent for an Iona missionary to convert it. St Aidan answered the call—one of the greatest missionaries that have ever lived. His career, as given by Bede, should be studied quite as much as that of St Columba,—"a man as discreet as virtuous, and who practised everything he found in the Bible, omitting none." It was under his guidance that Oswald obtained the supremacy, says Bede, over all the nations and provinces of Britain, with its four languages "of the Britons, Picts, Scots, and English." Yet King Oswald remained humble, affable, generous; while his courage and wisdom overawed even the savage Penda. One or two accusations against him which have reached our times appear to be either groundless or of little weight.

Oswald's methods were essentially Christian and pacific: it was the heathen restlessness of his enemies which alone forced him to battle. He gave his utmost help to Wessex, which had been winning its way to Christianity under St Birinus, stationed at the royal city, Dorchester (near Oxford). Hence Oswald's peaceable overlordship of Wessex, Kent, East Anglia, and the East and South Saxons; he ruled over them by the mere force of his power over Wessex and the North. But of one district, that of the Lindeswara (Lincoln), he had to possess himself by force; and the heathen Penda, now closely hemmed in all round—north, south, east, and west—could not but break forth at last. At the end of nine years he saw his opportunity. Assisted by the Lindeswara and the people of East Anglia, whose allegiance he himself claimed, he once more (642) conquered the Northumbrians at Maserfield, and St Oswald was slain. Thus perished a real hero, of the Arthur type in legend and the Alfred type in history, of whom we should have treasured a higher memory had it not been for the haze of miracle—childish, fabulous miracle—thrown around it by the otherwise faithful Bede. His dying words were to ask forgiveness of his foes.

The savage Penda must be considered as the destined scourge of a too superficial Christianity. Mixed motives he

had, no doubt, but it is incorrect to credit him with unmixed patriotism. He was a ruthless apostle of Odinism and persecutor of the Christians, till circumstances, within quite the latter part of his life, forced him into toleration, a toleration necessary for his supremacy and for united action with his Christian son. Oswald had been succeeded by his brother Oswy, who was obliged to look on while Penda ravaged Bernicia year by year; but he never submitted. Though guilty of an inexcusable murder, Oswy succeeded in reuniting Deira once more to Bernicia, and allied himself with his fellow-Christians of Strathclyde, as well as with the Picts and Scots of his borderland; but the extension of his influence over the East Saxons once more brought the whole force of Penda against him, and this time to its own destruction, at the river Winwæd, near Leeds. The old chief was deserted by part of his incoherent force, and, with all his great ealdormen, was slain. That was the death-knell of English heathenism. Oswy's position was now for a short time even greater than that of his predecessors, for he held Penda's dominions in addition to theirs; but his hold on the southern kingdoms was much looser, and Wulfhere, Penda's son, soon throwing off the yoke, set Mercia free.

Still Northumbria was united under a single House, and kept its independence for several generations; while Mercia, governed by great kings—Wulfhere, Ethelbald, and Offa—rose to the highest place of the three kingdoms which occupied the island; but it was now a Christian country, for Mercia was rapidly converted by Celtic missionaries. Offa, indeed, was the most powerful king seen in England before Alfred the Great. As for Wessex, it did not recover the check received by Ceaulin for some generations, while its internal struggles favoured the rise both of the Angle centre and the Angle north of England.

The remainder of our fourth period, till Egbert's appearance, is occupied with the settling down of the three Powers, the strife being chiefly between Mercia and Wessex. There was no more unity of government between these three than there had been between the seven or eight earlier States. But the ecclesiastical organisation of Theodore, from 670 to 690, had a powerful effect on their subsequent unification in one kingdom; and the constitutional

history of the people, omitted from the plan of these Commentaries, now assumes increased distinctness. Suffice it to say that the third and fourth of our periods saw the establishment, in all three kingdoms, of the burghs, mostly formed out of the early townships, the development of the National Assembly, and the orderly forms of jurisdiction in the various courts. These, before we arrive at our fifth period, are common features of the whole nation, and had taken such deep root that the Danish invasion made no serious change in them; while the Norman Conquest, though it innovated in the matter of the Courts Christian, reorganised the realm upon this basis.

The growth of the king's position is perhaps one of the most obvious marks of the diminution of the number of kingdoms; but in reality it arose gradually and chiefly out of the change in the relation of the individual to the land. The personal elements of freedom and right merge in the freedom and right conferred by holding land, and the personal obligation of military service came to rest upon the land; so that the gradations of territorial rank and responsibility now regulated society, limiting as well as forming each section from highest to lowest. This is an advantage which the Celtic race has rarely possessed. Tribal institutions and personal independence have a tendency to prevent the firm cohesion which is required to form a strong and united nation.

So firmly fixed were the social, religious, and political settlements of each kingdom in the "Triarchy" during the seventh century that, in spite of the struggles of royal families within, and the contest for boundaries against one another without, the threefold division remained intact till Egbert's time. Then the "Making of England" ceased, and the whole country, though still far from being completely united, finds itself under the government of the House of Wessex.

CHAPTER V.

THEODORE OF TARSUS, BEDE, AND ALCUIN: KING OFFA.

MANY distinctive marks of the Church of England are due to the extraordinary and significant fact already noticed, that the English people were for the most part evangelised by the Celtic clergy from the Iona centre, while they were organised by clergy from Rome. These last presented that higher ideal of law and order which had been the gift of Imperial Rome to mankind. Hence, feeble and transitory as its earlier work had been, it carried a weight out of all proportion to that work. It exhibited the same features which were familiar in the Roman provinces of the Continent, and it dazzled the ruder English by the brilliancy of the light it reflected from the Eternal City.

The Mission of Theodore of Tarsus was the natural sequence, in 668, of Augustine's Mission in 596; and he was supremely fitted by his Greek extraction, his age, learning, and character, to give the English Church a permanent organisation of its own. It was indeed a Roman organisation, and yet in a sense it was non-Roman and national. Bede's account of this great lawgiver should be carefully read. Like Columba, Augustine, and Aidan, he is the typical man of his own times, but his distinctive work was heralded by the famous Synod of Whitby in 664, of which Wilfrid was the soul, and without which Synod Theodore would have had no foundation on which to build. Wilfrid and his friend, Benedict Biscop, had, by this time, under the patronage of King Oswy's Queen Eanfled, and of his son, Alchfrid, once more imported the principles of the Roman Mission into Northumbria, then at the height of its imperial state. The fine abilities of the youth Wilfrid had been cultivated under the Queen's zealous care at Lindisfarne, in Kent, in Gaul, and in Rome, successively. Oswy, surrounded by these influences, slowly consented to give up his lifelong patronage of the system of Columba, Aidan, and Finan; and that turned the scale. His policy towards his dangerous neighbours in Mercia also led him powerfully in this direction,

since their new-born Christianity was, like his own older form, beginning to be attracted towards Rome by various circumstances. Whether this policy was good or evil, it had the effect of ruining the supremacy of Oswy's Northumbria. By giving up ecclesiastical independence, the Christian framework under which the kingdom had become the leading State of England, the king himself pulled down the edifice.

The famous Abbess Hilda, Colman, the chief of the Northumbrian Church, Cedd, the chief of the East Saxon Church, and the great mass of the Northumbrian abbots, were silenced at the Synod of Whitby by Oswy's Court-chaplain, Wilfrid, and Agilbert of Wessex; not indeed so much through their persuasions as because the great King Oswy had taken their side. His humorous speech about St Peter standing porter to the gate of heaven can hardly be taken as serious. It could deceive no one. In consequence of his decision the leaders of the Celtic Mission (except St Cuthbert) now turned their backs on Northumbria, leaving, however, behind them a spirit of resistance to the absolute dependence of the Church upon Rome which Wilfrid's own stormy career brought out in strong relief. The adoption of the Roman time for keeping Easter was itself far more important as to the future than it might seem; but there were limits,—limits which absolutely refused to open so far as to admit of Wilfrid's Appeal to Rome over the head of the National Church,—and the English perception of those limits actually forced him into banishment. One fruit of the exile of this highly gifted and enthusiastic but turbulent ecclesiastic was the conversion of Sussex, which had been commenced by an Irish monk, but had not yet proceeded far.

We cannot afford room for the details of Theodore's work 669–690.
in forming the dioceses of England, substantially as they exist now, but must simply call attention to the manner in which they followed the political divisions of England; nor can we describe here how townships merged into parishes; nor how the unification of the Church tended gradually to reduce the Triarchy to Monarchy; nor how the intimate relations of Church and State, formulated and established by Theodore and his friends, were brought into connection with Rome, through Canterbury. What Bede says of him is very suggestive: "He was the first of the Arch-

bishops whom the whole English Church consented to obey;" as also the Chronicle: "Before Theodore the Archbishops were Roman; after him they were all English." This marks him, even more than St Augustine, as a central figure for all time in English history. The English Church under him ceased to be a Mission Church, and became National. Through him and his friend Hadrian (who came from Naples, where Greek still lingered), the ancient Greek civilisation underlying the wreck of Rome, a fragment of the remote past sinking into the mould of centuries, was transferred and set up in this outlying corner of the world, producing a result, humbler, but still of the same species as, eight centuries later, distinguished the Renaissance and Reformation.

Under these cosmopolitan influences the Celtic Church was blended with the Roman; but the composite Church, though Romanised, was still opposed to what was afterwards called Ultramontanism, and Greek was taught as well as Latin in the monastic schools of Canterbury. Bede owed his remarkable education not only to the Celtic stock of learning concentrated at Jarrow, and to the importations of Wilfrid and Biscop from Rome, but also to the labours of Theodore and Hadrian. It is not too much to say that in this way the British Isles became the repository of the literary stores which had been swept off the barbarised Continent during the Dark Ages; and then the medium by which they were restored to the world. In Ireland, in Scotland, in Northumbria, and in Kent the ancient accumulations, destroyed elsewhere, were safely treasured up for future use, and were ready to be dispersed abroad again when Charles the Great reduced Europe to order. Then came once more the turn of the Continent, when Charles's tutor, the Northumbrian Alcuin, who had gathered up into himself the whole harvest of English cultivation, became the chief agent of the great Emperor in the education of Europe, and when Scotus Erigena preluded in Paris the reawakening of human thought. The writings of Eddi and the career of Ealdhelm were the more immediate results of the School of Bede, before that School, in its turn, after having discharged its function, sank under the invasion of the Danes. When England, ruined and laid waste, rallied from crushing disaster, it was fain to import from abroad the pupils of the men whom it had

formerly sent forth. Who could have foreseen that, amidst the decay of moribund civilisations, the replenishing agency, like the supply of electric fluid to exhausted atmospheres, should always be ready at hand to repair the waste?

We must specially notice Theodore's practical influence on the English parochial system. Before his time the Mission stations, bishops' houses, and clergy houses,—all of the monastic type,—had sufficed; but Theodore came from the shores of the Byzantine empire, where the establishment of Christianity had passed through a history of its own. There the *παροικία* of civil government had become the local centre of ecclesiastical government, and Theodore introduced his native system, which had already begun to be known in Western Europe, into England. Perhaps he is even responsible for the name. The general and loosely-limited administration of monks now changed into the fixed ministration of clergy within territorial limits, which easily fitted into the township system rooted in the Teutonic constitution. The monk becomes the chaplain of the landlord, who in his turn becomes patron on condition of building a church and supporting the clergyman, substituting this payment for the general offering made to the bishop. Though we rightly attribute this grand change to Theodore, it was rather indirectly than directly his work. As a matter of fact, he set these changes going by substituting territorial for missionary bishops, thus enabling them at once to control the local details of the diocese, and to place their clergy in a position analogous to their own. In so doing they were raising up a body which became, in the natural order of things, hostile to the monks as well as to the friars of a later date. Further, Theodore laid down the duty of paying tithes, though it remained very much at the will of the donor whether to pay them to the parish priest or the monastery, till 1200 A.D., at or about which date they were secured to the parson.

Further still, Theodore provided for Church government by annual Councils held at Cloveshoo, a place now unknown, in Mercia. Kings and ealdormen formed a part of those councils; for the decrees of the clergy had to be confirmed and attested by them. The bishops being members both of the Council and the Witan, ecclesiastical statutes were made in the latter body as well as the former. Such was the

fabric of Church and State under the Anglo-Saxons or Early English. This is very much what we call "Establishment," the settlement of Church and State, under which, with very little change, the English people are now living.

Northumbria soon lost its supremacy after the death of Oswy in 670; and, on account of the anarchical struggles between members of the Royal House, it now loses its interest for history. Who would care to remember the names of fifteen kings, who reigned between Oswy and Egbert, nearly all of whom died a violent death, or were forced to retire to monasteries? But in this anarchical Northumbria the place of kings is to us, as we have seen, more than filled by the truly venerable Bede and his pupil Alcuin; and it is important to remember that the political vigour of the Northumbrian independence, acquired under its three great kings, enfeebled as it became, was never quite destroyed till Egbert formed the English monarchy.

B. 670, d. 732.

A word or two more on these great men who take the place of kings. Bede, the prime inheritor of a great and mixed movement, feeding his precocious youth from all available intellectual sources during the fruitful times of Theodore and Hadrian, was distinguished from all others by being the first, and by a long way the first, man in the whole West of Europe to discover the true scope and method of an historian. He enjoys the distinction of having been able, by means of his extraordinary energy and mental cultivation, to weave together facts, extracted by his research from every institution, from every competent individual, into a readable form and in remarkably good Latin. Thus he established one of his books at least, his 'Ecclesiastical History of the English People,' as a standard work for all time,—a book seized upon by King Alfred as one of the four which he translated into the vernacular for the education of his people when they had been once more barbarised, a book which all other nations admit to be for its age unrivalled. For its strong Roman bias we have indeed to make allowance, as also for the miraculous stories with which, in the credulous spirit of the times, his pages are besprinkled.

Of the school formed by Bede, Alcuin, as we have said, was the prime fruit. Great men do not rise singly and alone, but as the result of previous processes, like Bede himself.

Born at York in 735, of a noble family, master of the school in which he had been trained, he was sent on a mission to Parma, and there met Charles the Great. From 782 till 804 he was employed by that wonderful man in organising his new national schools, and still more remarkably as tutor to himself and his courtiers in the exact sciences. A philosopher and reformer as well as an ardent churchman, while he courageously rebuked the intolerant conduct of the Emperor, he supplied his empire with catechisms on all the subjects of human knowledge which had survived the wreck of Rome. These were interspersed with numerous anecdotes, and illustrated by poems, biographies, and controversial theology. 782–804.

While Alcuin and Charles were regenerating continental Europe, the anarchy of Northumbria broke up the great schools which had been its glory, and neither Wessex nor Mercia retained any of the humbler cultivation which had begun to enter with Christianity. What there was, the Danes of the ninth century destroyed. We know the state in which Alfred found the island. It had to undergo a new process of education by means of the vernacular. Then commenced a wider pursuit of knowledge, under the care of the foreign scholars of the Continent, and also of the Welsh, who, unlike the English, had suffered no such eclipse.

So much for the rise and fall of Northumbria, and the far-reaching issues which flowed from its supremacy. Wessex had one short brilliant period during the "Triarchy," and then fell into much the same condition as its northern neighbour. The names of Ceadwalla and Ina mark its revival from the depression caused by the rise of Mercia and its warlike kings. Ceadwalla began to reign in 685, and re-established West Saxon supremacy over Sussex and the Isle of Wight, but being repulsed from Kent, retired to a monastery and died in 688. Ina, his successor, reduced Kent to submission, and with it London and all the South, awing the Mercians into an unwilling peace. He next attacked Dyvnaint (Cornwall, Devon, and Somerset), and tore off Somerset from the rest, making Taunton its capital, and refounding Glastonbury, the centre of old British Christianity. Then came, in 715, the inevitable struggle with Mercia, after which, though Ina prevailed, he weakly abdicated in 726, and died at Rome. 685–726.

This mistaken conduct threw Wessex into an anarchy of much the same kind as that of Northumbria, and there we leave it for the present.

But the history of Christian Mercia is very different. Under the strong kings who succeeded Penda—Wulfhere, Ethelbald, and, above all, Offa, it made up for its later growth than the rest by a rapid development. Ethelbald in 733 conquered Wessex at Somerton, though the conquered kingdom again rallied, and won quite as decisive a battle over Mercia in its turn at Burford in 754. This battle secured the independence of Wessex, in spite of the greatness of Mercia, till the destined descendant of Ina arose to give it pre-eminence in the person of Egbert. Wessex even retained its hold over Kent till 775, when Offa (who succeeded Ethelbald in 758) annexed it to Mercia at the battle of Otford; nor did the Saxon kingdom lose the shires of Oxford and Buckingham till Offa won them in 779 at the battle of Bensington. After this, finding himself unable to make further impression on Wessex, Offa subdued the Welsh of Powys as far as the Wye, building his famous Dyke or wall, and establishing Shrewsbury as his capital. The district between his Dyke and the Severn was now called the English March, but nevertheless the conquered Welsh remained on the land. In his old age Offa committed the shameful murder of Ethelbert, King of East Anglia, and annexed his kingdom. Four years later he died, leaving the way open for the final rise of Wessex at the expense of Mercia, which never recovered the effect of his death.

We have observed several indications of the confusion between secular and religious duties which affected the period of the Triarchy. In the course of these two centuries, no less than thirty kings and queens retired to convents. Such abdications of obvious duty were held to be noble sacrifices; but this failure of manliness and common-sense threw society into endless wars, and exposed subjects to the loss of their just rights. It was not so that Ethelbert had elevated Kent, nor Edwin and St Oswald Northumbria. It called for the stern teaching of adversity; and the Danes answered the summons.

This chapter may conclude with the remark that Offa's position, stretching from west to east, with the Thames

running through its centre, had a direct effect on the subsequent monarchy of the whole island. Though only a King of Mercia, he represented England in a manner and to a degree quite novel. He and Charles the Great were on independent terms of constant, though somewhat jealous, intercourse; and England became less and less isolated. On the ecclesiastical side both Northumbria, as we have seen, and Wessex had prepared the way for Offa's relations with Charles and the Popes. Willibrord had been sent forth from Mercia to convert the Frisians; Winfrid (or St Boniface) of Crediton had gone forth from Wessex. That great missionary had cemented the connection between the Frankish kingdom of Gaul, the frontier German tribes, and the Papacy. As Papal Legate and Archbishop of Mainz he crowned Pippin in 751. The effect of his ecclesiastical policy on the relations of France, Germany, and Italy can scarcely be exaggerated. A simple English monk shaped the history of the world. 771-796.

Offa's institution of Peter's pence was a policy based on the same theory, but connected with his natural desire to have an archbishop's see at Lichfield. The failure after his death to retain Lichfield as a metropolitan see established Canterbury for ever in its original position, and thus conduced not a little, through the proximity of that city to the coast of Kent and the Continent, to strengthen the Roman character of the medieval Church of England.

CHAPTER VI.

THE UNIFICATION OF ENGLAND.

CHARLES THE GREAT can scarcely be said to have affected England by any direct efforts to follow the Roman Emperors, whose place he professed to take, in their annexation of the British island; but he affected it indirectly in more ways than one. That is to say, he not only systematically exerted his influence over each portion of the Triarchy by the 768-814.

agency of Alcuin and others, by his costly gifts to English monasteries, and by his arrogant encouragement of English exiles, but (in a far more important way) by his education of one particular royal exile from Wessex, Egbert, he was the means of preparing that prince for the work he had to perform in England. Further, by his treatment of the heathen nations on his frontier, driving them in upon Scandinavia, he was one chief means of forcing out the Wikings, and impelling them to what we call the Danish Invasion. To these adventurers the persecuted fugitives communicated their bitter hatred of Christianity. A Norman province of France and a Danish England were the result, and by no means the smallest result, of Charles's career; but the heathenism with which these movements were charged was destined soon to pass away—the conquering race remained. This forms our new subject.

Let us first take a forward glance at the history of the two centuries and a half which intervened between Egbert and William the Conqueror before we take them in detail. We are now no longer, as in the previous time, at liberty to select a king here and there from a crowd of petty chiefs; but we have to note with care, if we have not done so already, the names and dates of the "Kings of England." Egbert, the ancestor of Queen Victoria, is the first of twenty pre-Norman kings, and each, though a few are of much less consequence than the rest, has his own special and characteristic mark. On the other hand, the whole series has one distinct and unbroken character in so far as it bears witness to the great movement of the Northmen from Scandinavia. These invasions were indeed separated from one another by a period of rest and settlement, the object of the first invasion being plunder, of the second, conquest; but in that interval the English kings were chiefly occupied in the regulation of the Danes who remained in the island, and of those who came over afterwards to join their comrades. Edward the Confessor represents the transition stage from the blended Englishman and Dane to the further fusion of that compound with the Norman-French. Not one of these tribal conglomerations was itself unmixed when the fusion took place. It was the mixture of races already mixed, which, operating at this time more or less over the whole country,

and not only over parts of it, has differentiated the English nation from all others. For this period we have the inestimable advantage of a contemporary history, the famous Chronicle, already quoted, which Alfred, grandson of Egbert, took care should make his dynasty known from the beginning. Just as with Bede's great work, no other European nation owns such an early national history as this.

Breaking up the period under groups of kings according to their relation to the Danish movement, it may be convenient to divide it into three parts. Egbert and Ethelwolf not only commence the unification of England, but their reigns span the years of Wiking piracy and plunder, which indeed began a little earlier. The next ten kings represent the struggle for mastery between the new settlers and the English, the period embracing the subjugation of the first settlers, and latterly the political amalgamation of the Anglo-Danes with the English. They are easily remembered on account of their direct descent from Egbert and Ethelwolf; but still more because they form (though two of them are unimportant) the most heroic line of successive sovereigns which this or any other nation has seen. These ten kings include Ethelwolf's four sons, the youngest of whom was the immortal Alfred, perhaps the highest type of human kind, and whose lofty spirit was propagated down the line to Edward the Elder, his son, and to Athelstan, Edmund I., and Edred, his grandsons,—all of whom successively display that same spirit in their several degrees. The great-grandsons of Alfred —Edwy and Edgar the Pacific—close our second group, of whom Edwy did not live to distinguish himself, though there are indications that he might, perhaps, if he had not been prematurely worried to the grave, have equalled his ancestors; and in Edgar culminated the glorious results which had been previously secured. Of the remaining eight kings the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth include Edward the Martyr and Ethelred the Unready, the two great-grandsons of Alfred, and Edmund II. (or Ironsides), his great-great-grandson, Ethelred's son; and under the kingship of these last commences a third period, that of Danish Conquest, which was accomplished when Cnut ascended the English throne in 1016, and broke the English line. He and his two sons—Harold I. and Harthacnut—are the sixteenth, seventeenth,

802–858.

858–975.

975–1066.

and eighteenth. Edward the Confessor and Harold II., the nineteenth and twentieth, close the series.

It required this continuous struggle under twenty kings to turn the Danes into Englishmen, but it was done at last. The process had however as yet chiefly affected the northern and central portions of England. Something was still wanting to bring the full weight of the whole country to bear upon the rest of the European family. The Norman Conquest supplied the want. Up to that time the English relations with the Continent had been confined to pilgrimages, royal marriages, mutual education of princes, mutual gifts of literature and religion. The former casual connection was, under the Normans, exchanged for a great territorial and military position on both sides of the Channel,—a place greater than that of any of the infant States which were then gradually assuming shape. Well was it for England that her insular position stunted what would have been a too rapid growth. When the time arrived for that same insular position to prove the means of extending her race and influences beyond the British Isles, her constitution, her institutions, and her peculiar type of culture had found time to ripen before they were planted out far and wide in every quarter of the habitable globe.

The expulsion of Egbert, which carried such important consequences, had been effected by the joint action of the kings of Mercia and Wessex, Offa and Beohtric. When both were dead, the Witan of Wessex sent for the royal exile, who in 802 began his great career. Wisely deferring vengeance on the Mercians, who at once invaded his land, he copied the lessons of Charles by enforcing order for some years amongst his own people in Wessex, and then protecting his flank by subduing the dangerous West Welsh of Cornwall. Hitherto retaining their independence of Wessex, though much broken by the loss of Somerset and the consequent isolation from Wales, the West Welsh still formed a majority of the population in Devon, and holding Cornwall inviolate, kept the Tamar as a secure border. But the famous Dyvnaint of St Goran, more pompously styled the "kingdom of Gerontius the Great," was declining, and the people saw that they must break down the yoke of Wessex at once or not at all. In 815, Egbert conquered them for the time, and ten years later won the

great battle of Camelford; but the gallant Cornishmen did not even yet give up the struggle, but rising once more, with the aid of the invading Danes, in 836, were only overthrown by Egbert at the still greater battle of Hengstone, after a determined resistance. It was one of the minor "decisive battles of the world."

Even this, however, though decisive, was not absolutely final. As late as 975 we hear of an under-king of Cornwall, Dungarth; and even Athelstan, who had previously driven the West Welsh out of Devon, recognised Howel as King of the West Welsh in 926. The greatest blow dealt to Cornish independence was in reality given by means of the gradual dissolution of its many separate bishopries, and the absorption of their sees under one bishop, who was planted at Bodmin, then at St Germains, and finally outside Cornish bounds. Then at last Devon and Cornwall were episcopally united by bishops, who were planted first at Crediton and then at Exeter. It has been reserved for our own day to restore Cornwall to its separate episcopal rights. But the prolonged independence of the people, like those of Kent, has never, in the transition from a kingdom to a county, been forgotten. At not a few of our English crises both have made themselves heard.

Just after the battle of Camelford the Mercians were rash enough to attack Wessex once more. This time they were crushed at Ellandune—an unknown place in Wilts—by the King of Wessex, whom they could no longer despise. Soon after this defeat they lost two more desperate battles at the hands of the East Anglians, who had been waiting their time to avenge Offa's murder of their king; and the country now succumbed to Egbert's summons. Her time had come. Mercia had never been compacted together like Wessex, but was only the temporary creation of a few strong kings.

The conqueror's use of his victory is instructive. He now formed a new sort of kingdom, an appanage to Wessex, out of the south-eastern kingdoms which had been sometimes annexed to Wessex, but of late to Mercia; and he placed, not a king of the old blood as had been usual, but his own son, Ethelwolf, over this united secondary kingdom, with ealdormen over each of its shires. It thus became a province of Wessex under home government; and as its sea-coast was

the old "Saxon Shore," and the towns which were afterwards called "the Cinque Ports" were rising about this time, it is extremely probable that the confederation which became so famous owed its rudimentary form to Egbert's action. It was the first time that the seagoing population of Sussex and Kent had been brought under a king of both, who was also subordinate to the King or over-lord of the rest of England.

With the submission of Mercia came that of Wales; and soon afterwards Northumbria, already in an enfeebled condition and grievously harassed by the Danes, completely submitted without a battle. If the Northern Strathclyde was at this time under the lordship of Northumbria, as it probably was, Egbert ruled up to the Firths of Clyde and Forth; while his final victory over Danes and Cornish at Hengstone rounded off the glory of the English Charlemagne. He died in 837, the first English king to exhibit a large and judicious policy. In this he was much favoured by circumstances; but that he knew how to take advantage of them, cannot but be attributed to the lessons he had learnt abroad in Charles's court and army. The opportunity was unique. The more we consider his career, the more plainly we see that his unification of England was no happy chance, but the result of a rare foresight, of long patient waiting, and of rapid action when the time had come at last. This was a true Bretwalda, and for him, as we have seen, the name was invented.

Let us here distinguish the different kinds of supremacy which marked the growth of general monarchy over England. That of the seven falsely-called "Bretwaldas" was little more than an acknowledgment of superiority, shown probably by an annual present,—let us call it the first. That of Egbert (the second) was far in advance of it, in its completeness, its personal government, and its hereditary nature; but it was only an over-lordship after all. The subject-kingdoms, even of south-eastern England, kept their own kings and Witangemots, while Egbert and his successors were only styled "Kings of the West Saxons." Alfred's supremacy (the third) was more perfect; but the Danelaw, established by himself, cut him off from any practical exercise of power over half the island. Athelstan's is of a fourth and superior kind,—a real

supremacy, with a single Witan; but he is not King of the English, only of the "West Saxons, Mercians, and Northumbrians." It is not till Edgar's reign that we have the fifth stage, a united kingdom, a national king, a King of England. Common measures can now be taken for defence, and by way of laws made for and by the whole land. Falling to pieces under the Second Invasion of the Danes, the supremacy reaches its sixth stage under Cnut, who governs the whole in imperial fashion by means of division into four provinces, under great earls, who are something like the old under-kings with another name. It required the Norman Conqueror to form a single England under a single will, acting directly on the nation, and with a single council of advice. That was the seventh stage. Till that was done England could never have passed under the completed form of the feudal system, out of which have sprung her ordered freedom and her social advantages.

To return. Before we commence the reign of Ethelwolf, we must glance at the previous history of these Danes who now colour every page of English history. There was little to distinguish them from the equally fierce and cruel Angles and Saxons who had settled in Britain three centuries before. The enervating effect of those centuries of imperfect Christianity and civilisation made the descendants of the earlier invaders an easy prey to the later; for the gracious lessons they had learnt required to be tempered by the lessons they had unlearnt, or not yet learnt to combine with the new. In other words, they had not yet learnt to combine the growing sentiments of law and order, religion and morality, with the stern requirements of war, or even self-defence. Just as we have seen that kings received high praise for deserting their thrones to become monks, so naturally, by force of example, also passed away the warlike qualities of their subjects; while at the same time the resources of civilisation had not yet been opened out, so as to take the place of the rough methods of heathenism. The English were thus at a great disadvantage in their first conflicts with the heathen invaders from the North; but they soon found, in following the noble kings who succeeded Egbert, the true road to victory, and only succumbed to the Second Invasion when the royal stock had worn out.

Then came the gradual amalgamation of the two sets of

Teutonic invaders, a union chiefly due to the essential oneness of the common stock the parts of which had been so long separated. The home customs of the English and Norsemen were much the same; the ranks of society differed only in name. The "bonders" gathered to the "thing" like the ceorls to the moot, only much more zealously: for the "thing" was far more a living part of the free and independent life of the Norsemen, and much more a popular institution, than the aristocratic Witangemot. The heathen deities were much the same; the English war-band was paralleled by the Norse Wikings who lurked in the Wi, or Wick, or creek, and were only more nautical than the English had been by force of the sea-life in which they had during the course of generations perfected their skill. They were excellent navigators, born seamen. Their ships were no doubt far superior to those of the English. They were swift row-boats, and capable of long voyages, though ill-fitted for gales.

And this connects itself with the reason why they swarmed off, headed by their Wikings, under the pressure and incitement of the increased population which had been driven in upon Jutland and Norway by Charlemagne. The shore of Norway especially was unable to bear any fresh demand on its food-supply, much less such a pressure as this. The numerous narrow fiords breaking the coast-line were divided by lofty mountains; each population was isolated, and each multiplied while in this isolated state. Its superabundant population could thus only betake itself to the sea. And what a lure was presented by the treasures stored up along the coasts of Ireland and Scotland, France and England. Well they knew the degeneracy of these people. The shores might be conquered in detail; it was only the great armies they had to fear, and Wessex alone could produce these. Had Charles the Great and Egbert been able to pay as much attention to sea, as to land, affairs, the course of the world might have been very different.

For further light about the sea-rovers, it is best to refer to Mr Laing's 'Heimskringla, or Collection of Sagas,' from 841-1177, a book not even yet superseded; for Charles and his successors, to Guizot's 'Civilisation of France' and 'Civilisation of Europe,' first making acquaintance with the

short history of the Emperor which Eginhard, his secretary, wrote. The affairs of the Western Empire, which led to the Norman Settlement in France, are almost as important to this period as those of England. Intermarriages between French and English royal families are frequent; and the history of the Norman duchy (which may be read in Lappenberg), so vital to the history of England, only becomes intelligible when set in the continental history of its time. The gradual progress of the Danish movement should be traced in Mr Green's 'Conquest of England.'

CHAPTER VII.

THE DANES AND ALFRED THE GREAT.

THE Norsemen, properly so called, from Norway, or Fingaels, as the Irish called them (fair strangers), began their ravages in the latter half of the eighth century, establishing themselves in the Scottish islands and along the east coast of Ireland. A little later they were followed by the Dubhgaels or dark strangers, the Danes, who gradually became the superior race of the two in Waterford, Cork, Limerick, and eventually Dublin, which was their centre in 856. They lost in Ireland these distinctive names in the general one of Ostmen—men from the East. Booty being plentiful and resistance feeble, they soon attacked England,—the coast of Dorsetshire in 787, Jarrow and Wearmouth in 793 and 794. But England had a respite from invasion for the first half of the ninth century, broken indeed by the alliance of the Danes with the Cornish, which Egbert promptly crushed. During this time they were ravaging the French coast, and held what ports they pleased from Friesland to Bordeaux. These, and the subsequent "hosts" which began to invade England systematically in Ethelwolf's time, were Danes from North Jutland, Zealand, and South Sweden, and their avowed policy was to join their settlements in Ireland and France by the conquest of England, thus forming one great European

Empire of the North. In pursuit of that policy, the Norse piracy and plunder soon gradually turned into Danish invasion and settlement.

The national organisation now commencing in Scandinavia found its earliest development at sea. The "hosts" were not mere sea-wolves like the Fingael, but soldiers as well as seamen. They were the first Europeans to recognise the importance of rapid movement in war, mounting the horses which they caught, and surprising the unwary English,—a mounted infantry. Not that a complete and systematic warfare had fully developed in Ethelwolf's time, but of course no strict line can be drawn. Throughout his twenty years' reign he was in conflict with this pertinacious enemy, and the balance of success was on their side; but the mistake of reckoning him as a feeble monarch has been conclusively exposed. He is not to be denied credit for the success of his brave ealdormen of Dorset, Devon, Kent, and Surrey; still less for his own great victory at Ockley in 851, the most sanguinary yet known.

If it is true that Ethelwolf, like Henry VIII. and Charles I., received an ecclesiastical education, that may be the reason why an ecclesiastical hue colours his reign, but it may be shown that the religious changes of his time did in reality add greatly to his political strength. He is no longer called indeed the founder of the tithe-system, but, copying the Carlovingian Government, he set the great example of giving a tenth part of his own wide lands to the Church; and the growing power of the clergy soon extended to all lands in the kingdom the principle of paying a tenth of their produce. By the ninth century this tithe had rooted the clergy to the land, and joined them in strict union with the landholders, so making them to a great extent independent of kings, monasteries, and bishops. Thus rooted, the Danish incursions cut off their supplies, and forced them to make common cause with the defence. The invasion had a still further effect. When the settlement of the plunderers began, the above intimate relation to the land and the landlords also tended to hasten the conversion and absorption of the new-comers. This was a very different thing from the case of the British Church at the first Teutonic invasion; but then these new settlers were of the same race

as the English. Egbert and Ethelwolf had also done much to raise the position of the bishops, especially of the Archbishop of Canterbury, and statesmen-bishops like Ealstan and St Swithin begin to appear, as they had appeared long before on the Continent; but there were many reasons why the great feudal position of the prelates did not exist in England till after the Conquest.

Seven years before Ethelwolf died the Danes marked the new stage of their movement by spending the winter on Thanet Island, and four years later on Sheppey. From these strongholds they ravaged Kent, and even London itself, and from that vantage-ground neither Ethelwolf nor Ethelbert (for the short reign of Ethelbald in Wessex may be neglected) could dislodge them; so that we now enter with Ethelred in 866, and Alfred in 871, on the tremendous struggle which has deeply scored the page of English history. It was in the former year that Ivar the Boneless led his host to the conquest of East Anglia, from whence they never again withdrew; and here it was that St Edmund, the under-king, became the St Sebastian of England, and, by his death, the founder of Bury St Edmunds. Marching thence upon York, all Northumbria fell before them. All the abbeys—Tynemouth, Streonshalh (or Whitby), Melrose, Lastingham, Ripon—were destroyed, all the bishops' houses, all York, except the Minster, all libraries and schools. No help came from Mercia or Wessex. But when the host invaded Mercia, the under-king called on Ethelred, who was now his West Saxon lord, for help, and the Danes thought it best, after a slight conflict, to make peace. It was required by Wessex equally with the Danes, in order to prepare for the approaching and inevitable struggle for life or death which came in 871.

Yorkshire and East Anglia formed the basis of the Danes, perpetually recruited from the shores of the Baltic; Wessex alone, of Ethelred and Alfred. The last, in whom our interest centres, now twenty-two, shared loyally all his brother's counsels, and commanded under him the army. The storm broke—broke upon Mercia, which succumbed at once; and now the Danes found themselves face to face with Wessex. This campaign, one of the most interesting in history, is authoritatively described, and can be traced in maps of

Berks, Wilts, Hants, Surrey, and Somerset; but here we can only indicate outlines. The Chronicle tells us that nine battles were fought in this one year, 871, but it only names six; the others were fights of less importance. The sites of Reading, Englefield, Ashdown (on the Berkshire Downs), Basing, and Merton in Surrey, mark the line of combats; each host advancing and retreating alternately: "the Danes," says Asser, "fighting for victory, the English for life, their loved ones, and their country." In the space of a few days the English had slain one Danish king, nine earls, and innumerable soldiers; but in the last battle, Ethelred
871–901. received a mortal wound, and Alfred, his "secundarius," was left with only a handful of survivors, against a desperate foe, constantly recruited, while his own militia were exhausted. Nevertheless he made a last audacious attack on the Danes at Wilton, and almost succeeded; but the Danes, bravely rallying, fell upon and absolutely destroyed his force. Nothing was left but to make terms, and buy off the enemy. No one of course will confuse this act with the later cowardice of Ethelred the Redeless and his Witan, by which gold was systematically substituted for iron, with the never-failing result.

The Danes also were glad of a respite, and wintered in London. Reserving Wessex for the next campaign, they now incorporated Mercia, placing an under-king over the western division, while with remarkable sagacity they spread themselves in force over the eastern, thus resting on a secure sea-base, and making themselves thoroughly masters of two-thirds of England. Alfred, with equal sagacity, now determined to break off the invasion at the root by creating a navy. London, with the great Kentish and Sussex ports, being in Danish hands, the English navy had disappeared, or was not available; and he had to make a beginning with the ports of Wessex — Portsmouth, Southampton, Poole, Plymouth, and the rest. This hasty provision was insufficient to stop the hostile armament, but it performed good service in the campaigns of 875 and 876, proved more than a match for detached squadrons, and after the Danes were subdued, developed into a powerful force.

Both sides were prepared to fight it out in 876. France and Ireland were left at rest by the Danes in order to con-

centrate upon Wessex, and Wareham was the point selected. The Danish fleet, however, being wrecked off Swanage, Alfred's ships were able to block up the army, which had stolen away to Exeter, while he forced it with his troops to surrender upon terms. Trusting to the truce now made, he dismissed his force; but the arrival of a great Danish fleet in the Severn proved too strong a temptation to break faith, and the Danish army thus placed the English at a hopeless disadvantage. Alfred had nothing left for it but to make his famous retreat to the marsh-fort of Athelney, from whence he saw the whole land fall under the enemy. It is now that we have the delightful stories of the cakes and the disguise as a harper,—stories perfectly credible, but not pretending to be historical. It was Odda, ealdorman of Devon, who broke the spell by surprising the new force which landed on his coast, and once more the western shires rose up in arms, eager to join their king. Silently and loyally mustered at Egbert's stone, on the east side of Selwood, the men of Somerset, of Wilts, and part of Hants. "They were fain to see him"—right glad and joyous. Dashing on the Danes at Ethandun (near Westbury), they "put the host to flight, rode after them to their fortress," and starved them into surrender. By the peace of Wedmore the Danes evacuated Wessex, and Alfred stood godfather to Guthrum, their king.

Perhaps nothing proved the wisdom of the great king more than his deliberate policy of setting free only a portion of England, content with securing Western Mercia and London, along with Wessex, instead of insisting on impossible terms. He knew that the task before him and his family was to secure a time of rest, and gradually to bring the settled Danes into line with the English. It was too late to turn them out. All the best part of the land, all its chief outlets, were in his own hands; the rest must wait: the conversion of the Danes was sure to follow; they would be impregnated with English influences; the sufferings of the conquered people of Northumbria and East Mercia would thus be mitigated, and the Saxons would have, when the time came for resuming the work of Egbert, the sympathies of the Angles,—a very difficult, if not impossible, thing to obtain in the immediate present. After centuries

of conflict with their southern kinsmen, how could it be otherwise?

It was now that Alfred gave himself up to the self-imposed task of regenerating his country. His success has never been equalled. It is to be found in every book. Whether we regard his laws, his police, his redivisions of population, his reconstituted Assemblies, his creation of a navy, his management of the Church, his education of the clergy, of the upper classes, and of the poor, the record is amazing. The best modern constitutional histories are even beginning to give back to him the credit for some of the institutions which were of old attributed to him, but for which it has been the fashion to deprive him of any honour. It was in keeping with this extraordinary breadth of mind that he should in such an age have sent exploring expeditions to the ends of the earth, and opened communications with India.

How did Alfred attain this matchless superiority? Possibly his early visit to Rome and his contact with foreigners at the court of his stepmother, Judith, may have had some effect, —for he was not afraid to introduce foreign tutors; but we must look deeper. He was trained in the hardy school of bitter adversity, and he was taught the passing nature of secular affairs by the recurrence of a distressing disease, supposed to be epilepsy. These falling on a truly Christian character produced a loftiness of purpose only occasionally met with. Life was too short for the performance of his task. Night was turned into day in order to supply his thirst for knowledge and his ceaseless yearning to benefit his people. New schools, new monasteries, arose as if by magic. What can be more touching than the remarks scattered through his translations and editions of the four great books which were the foundation of English prose? Where shall we find so wise, so transparently simple a man; where such a mixture of light and love, manly sweetness and judicious severity, the soldier, the scholar, and the saint? Where such a noble contempt of danger and difficulties, such a grand indifference to the ordinary pursuits of ease and luxury? We may add, where such a perception of the golden mean in the mixed affairs of Church and State? Though recognising, as in his age could hardly be otherwise, Rome as the focus of

Christianity, he retained his bishops under his own direct influence. They were his agents in civilising his people. He sometimes "admonished" them; he calls the great Plegmund "my archbishop"; he issued Pope Gregory's Pastoral in his own name. In short, he set the true example of Royal Supremacy as required for that age.

His military and naval administration was tested before he died. His genius had, for the first time, divided the fyrd, or militia, into two parts—one for defence, which was consistent with attention to agriculture, the other for active service. The system was welcome to his people, and it stood the test of the fresh invasion under Hasting, who attacked by way of Romney, hoping to hold out behind the Andredweald till the Danelaw could be persuaded to rise. But Alfred and his son Edward blocked him up and starved him out. Yet in 894 the whole Danelaw did rise; but still Alfred and Edward out-generalled and beat them. All this is described in the Chronicle, but it is silent as to the last three years of the great king's reign.

The consensus of the world has been given to his enthronement at the head of kings and rulers. A faint complaint may now and then be heard from some obscure quarter. It may generally be traced to the human weakness of dislike to hearing Aristides always called "The Just."

In connection with the rise of Egbert's house in the ninth century, it should be remarked that both Scotland and Wales followed the English example in the unification of their government under one head. Kenneth the Scot (about 842) at last headed the united race of Picts and Scots. In 910 Howel Dda commenced his fine career as king and legislator in Wales over the united kingdoms of Gwynnedh, Dynevor, and Powys. But these, like the rise of Egbert's House, are really echoes of the Carlovingian imperial movement. Not only France, but Germany, Flanders, and the Scandinavian kingdoms rise now to the height of feudal monarchy under different names. Never was there again such a consentaneous movement in Europe till the close of the fifteenth century. Then at last the consolidation of the feudal portions of States into modern sovereignty produced the order of European politics under which we live.

CHAPTER VIII.

FROM EDWARD THE ELDER TO EDWY.

EDWARD (afterwards called the Elder, by way of distinction) was selected in 901 by his Witan in preference to Ethelwald, son of Alfred's elder brother, King Ethelred; and this was according to the constitution: it was the election of the fittest. Such, within limits, it has remained. There is no such thing as "divine right of kings" in the British constitution. Blackstone's summing-up runs thus: "The Crown is by common law and constitutional custom hereditary; . . . but the right of inheritance may from time to time be changed or limited by Act of Parliament, under which limitations the Crown still continues hereditary." This is the proper interpretation of the action of the English people at the various crises of their history, and the examples which rule it should be made a special study. In the present case the course of events showed the wisdom of passing over the next heir, both in relation to his bad, and to Edward's good, conduct.

901–925. Edward, like Egbert, took some years to settle his kingdom and concert measures with his sister Ethelfleda and her husband, the ealdorman of Mercia, before he commenced the task left him by his father. It had become his duty to attack the forfeited independence of the treacherous Danish settlers,—always hostile, and already making incursions on all sides. For coast-defence his navy, the glory of Alfred, numbered a hundred vessels. By a preliminary movement Chester was saved from becoming the headquarters of a fresh Danish invasion under Hasting; and now, in 913, began the fine military campaigns made by the king on one side, and the lord and lady of Mercia on the other, advancing in concert, side by side, towards the north, every move foreseen and devised in common. The strategic principle adopted was to build strong forts at each advance, which should support one another, form a shelter for English refugees, and prevent the enemy from recovering lost ground. The effects of this policy were discovered in after-years, when

the rescued English themselves turned on their deliverers, and found themselves restrained by the garrisons of these forts. The death of ealdorman Ethelred, Ethelfleda's husband, in 912, had given Edward possession of Oxford, Gloucester, and the adjacent lands—probably the whole valley of the Thames—for the defence of which from the Danes Mercia had been hitherto held responsible.

It is now that history first mentions Oxford as a place of importance. The St Frideswide legends of Oxford are all connected with Mercia, of which it was the border-town. The later legends which connect it with Alfred have no authority; but he may have had more to do with it than merely founding a mint at this place, as he did. He must certainly have been often there: and as he founded schools in most places, he may well have done so at Oxford. But the existing mound in the castle precincts is so much like those at Warwick and Tamworth, thrown up in these campaigns by the lord and lady of Mercia, that modern antiquaries are probably right in attributing it to Edward the Elder, who placed his second son Alfward in command of the place. Each of the new forts became the centre of a new shire,—Warwick, Hertford, Buckingham, and Bedford. Oxford had been already established as one of the nine shires of South England.

The real difficulty of the king and his sister lay with the five strongholds of the Danes, the Fifburghs. Of these Ethelfleda, with a spirit worthy of her kin, took Derby and Leicester; Edward, Nottingham, Stamford, and Lincoln. The five fortresses had been sagaciously formed by the Danes into a strong confederation, for the purpose of holding down the English of Mercia and forming a sort of outwork of East Anglia, which was itself the royal centre of the Danelaw. They were bound together and organised under common assemblies, and a common form of government, which may possibly have formed the precedent for the Cinque Ports of the next century. Hence so strong was the Danish element in the towns that for a long time after they were conquered they gave no small trouble to the English.

These campaigns, which we may fairly call scientific, added Essex and East Anglia, along with the rest of Mercia, to Wessex: while Ethelfleda, before she died, brought York

under her power, and gained a victory over the Welsh at Brecknock. To add to the value of these conquests, the Scots, as well as the people of Northumbria and Strathclyde, overmastered by Edward's success and fame, "chose him for father and lord." This commendation of the Scots and Northumbrian chiefs is the earliest distinct case of so-called "feudal" homage from Scotland, and has been the subject of much controversy. It may be put thus. Edward's position was in reality imperial. The King of the "Angul-Saxons," as he called himself, governing from South England, substituted for his own direct government of the Northumbrian Lothians a Scottish government of that district, a government by a King of Scotland who was vassal to the King of England. Athelstan, after his victory at Brunanburgh, emphasised this position.

The general policy of the House of Wessex was equally well sustained by Athelstan, Edmund, and Edred, the three surviving sons of the great Edward. That is to say, the kingship of Wessex over England was to be maintained at all costs: and to this end the settled Danes were to be studiously kept in subordination, and prevented from bringing reinforcements from over the sea. Athelstan, who is often said to have been illegitimate, was probably the son of a shepherd-girl, yet he was the one of all the race to carry furthest not only the ancestral policy, but the grandeur of the "King of the English and Emperor of the Britains" (as he was styled) in his relation to foreign sovereigns. Two of his sisters had been married by his father to great princes, Charles the Simple of France and Louis of Arles: he himself married two more of them,—one to the Saxon Otho (who after she died became emperor), and the other to Hugh the Great, Count of Paris. Louis d'Outremer, his nephew of France, was sent to his Court for education.

925-940.

At the outset of his reign his victories over the West Welsh at last made Devon English, and Exeter a thriving city: the North Welsh also now became tributary. At the end of his reign his great victory at Brunanburgh marked the direct effect of the vigorous policy of fusion, which he steadily applied to the whole North of the island, just as Edward had commenced it in the Midlands. A common Witan, collected at York from every part of the country, made apparent the

fact that a united England had now been formed under a common king. The King of Wessex had, in short, become King of England. Mints in numerous towns established a common coinage; and the law of frankpledge was now systematised amongst the Danish population as well as the English,—a self-acting machinery in every portion of the land. Thus was maintained Alfred's stipulation in forming the Danelaw, that the "wehr" or price of each man's life, of whatever nation, should be the same. Now it was that the shire-system of the South and Midlands was extended over the North, though in some cases, as in Yorkshire, formed into smaller divisions than remained finally after Edgar's more complete organisation. But this extension of dominion made necessary a system of feudal government by great ealdormen over many shires together,—the system of the age, and sure to prove troublesome in the future. Thus East Anglia was handed over to Athelstan, one of the royal House, popularly called the "Half-King"; the ealdorman of Essex governed London, Middlesex, Bucks, and Oxon; and a Norseman named "Eric of the Bloody Axe" was placed over Northumbria.

The battle of Brunanburgh requires a special notice. It was not to be expected that such a far-reaching policy should be carried through without a struggle on the part of the scarcely yet settled Danes; and further, they were now urged on by their brethren of the province of Normandy, where Rolf the Ganger, to whom it had been ceded by Charles the Simple, King of France, in 912, had been succeeded by William Longsword. These Normans, forming already a united and powerful duchy, were seriously aggrieved by the alliances of the house of Wessex with their numerous enemies, but they did not openly join the rebellion. Round the central core formed by the Danish princes of Northumbria, gathered every race and people that had been conquered by Alfred and his family—Scots, Welsh, Ostmen, the mixed people of Strathclyde, and the Angles of Bernicia. Against them Athelstan led his well-equipped army of Saxons and Mercians; and in his brother Edmund, though only a lad of fifteen, he had a second in command whose youthful valour might be compared with that of the Black Prince at Crecy, and of Henry V. at Shrewsbury. The

victorious result, and a grand Old English war-song which records it, are all we know of a battle which for a century afterwards was always called "the great fight." The very site of Brunanburgh is unknown; but five Danish kings, seven earls, and the son of the King of Scots were left dead upon the field, with nearly all their host. Constantine himself, the aged King of Scots, and Anlaf or Olaf, chief of the Ostmen, both of whom gave the immediate impulse to the rising, escaped.

This complete success must surely be regarded rather as the culmination of the House of Egbert and Alfred than, as has been said, the signal for its decay. It put an end to the old claims of the Welsh and the new ones of Scotland; and even the novel interference of the Ostmen was never again repeated on the same scale. It made the subsequent position of Edmund, Edred, and Edgar possible, and it placed the "Emperor of the Britains" above all contemporary princes in real power. It is true that the north and east of England remained, after as before the battle, in a restless state; but it was half a century before this entailed any serious consequences. Edmund and Edred, the king's two brothers, had almost an unbroken series of successes in coping with the minor rebellions that occurred; and Edgar, from the calm security of his administration, justly received the name of the "Pacific."

We see the effect of the great battle in the failure of the rising which took place against the rule of the young
940–946. Edmund, called the "Magnificent," or "Doer of great deeds," even though a rebel Archbishop of York headed the confederacy of the Midland Danes and the Ostmen. Without a pitched battle the struggle merged into a mere defence of the Fifburghs, the central stronghold of the Danes. These Edmund attacked and reduced one after another, and two of the great chiefs became Christians. These political conversions offend us; but they apply to a different order of things from the present. Christianity implied at the very least a renunciation of vicious deities and respect for law. This gave the surest guarantee for peace; and the presence of unmolested priests might gradually win the heart.

It was again in this reign that numbers of Norwegians, swarming over from the Isle of Man and other settlements,

invaded and took root in the districts of Cumberland and Westmoreland, extending as far north as Galloway, as far south as Cheshire. Their designations of hill and dale in the Lake districts are those at present familiar. It was to break this new link between the Irish Ostmen and Danish Northumbria that Edmund endowed Malcolm King of Scots with Cumberland, on condition he should be his "fellow-worker by sea and land." Thus the Scots had become vassals, on conditions, for both Lothian and Cumberland, and we hear no more of Strathclyde. We must mark each of these steps, too commonly neglected.

The murder of Edmund by Leolf the outlaw cut short a fine career. His sons Edwy and Edgar were passed over for his brother, Edred, who worthily followed in his foot- 946–955.
steps, taking at once for chief adviser Dunstan, the young Abbot of Glastonbury, whose abilities his brother had just discovered before he died, and whose career colours the history of the next generation. The election of Edred was the first truly national election by a Witan; and the Archbishops of Canterbury and York for the first time joined in the Coronation of the king of the "fourfold realm," which included the English, the Britons, the "pagans" of Mid-Britain, and the Danelaw. It was over these "pagans" that he was "imperator." The Danes had again risen on the murder of Edmund in 946; on which occasion, the Chronicle says, Edred "ravaged Northumbria and completely quelled it." It was now that Wilfrid's minster at Ripon was burnt. This rising was, like the former one, connected with the turbulence of the Archbishop of York, who was punished, but not executed. Edred's last act was to substitute an earl for the under-king of Northumbria, wisely granting the office to a descendant of the old Bernician kings, in whose family it remained for a century. His brief reign ended in 955.

There seems no sufficient reason to credit Dunstan with political sagacity in these matters, which were, in fact, the direct and natural sequel of the reigns of Edred's two elder brothers; but as he now comes to the front, we must preface his remarkable career by a few words on his attempted reforms. By the time of which we are now speaking, the establishment of parish priests or secular clergy, set on foot by

Archbishop Theodore, had come to require reform. So also had the monastic system, which had gone on side by side with it, and which, both in the Celtic and Roman missions, had been eminently useful as a means of propagating Christianity and civilisation amongst barbarians. The Danish Invasion had emphasised the secularity of the one and the inevitable corruption of the other. The reformers of the tenth century proposed to meet the need by strengthening the episcopate, and by introducing the strictness of the Benedictine Rule, which indeed had scarcely been followed at all in England. The first process was expedited by the ecclesiastical events of the Continent, where the False Decretals had given a fresh colour to the whole ecclesiastical system, and indeed had been the means of protecting the papal supremacy at a time when otherwise it could hardly but have collapsed in consequence of the horrible degradation of the Papacy itself. Under this hollow and inflated system the sacerdotal power of the clergy was beyond all measure magnified, for they were emancipated from all secular authority; but, on the other hand, the bishops, with appeal on appeal, ending with the "Successor of St Peter," were their lords in a sense unknown to antiquity. For want of a better word this may be called by anticipation "Hildebrandism," and the attempt was now made to constitute it as the great engine of reform.

The other principle of reform, both for seculars and regulars, was celibacy. The marriage of the parish priest was now called concubinage, and it was to be systematically stopped. The seculars must be in this respect exactly like the regulars. Odo, made Archbishop of Canterbury by Edmund, took the lead in these matters; but Dunstan, from his great political position, is more associated with them in history. It was this Odo the Severe who led the party which was now drawn up in bitter hostility to the party of the secular clergy who claimed to keep their wives. The first was the most fashionable party, the most powerful. Its policy was, at any cost, to separate the clergy from their wives, to expel the canons, who were allowed to marry, from the cathedrals, and to force the monasteries to adopt the Benedictine Rule of poverty, chastity, and obedience. Dunstan was less violent in working this policy than Odo; more

merciful, but not less persistent. England was torn to pieces by a party division which was attaining great dimensions before Edred's death; and the Coronation of Edwy, Edmund's eldest son, was the celebrated occasion when it was kindled to a flame. It is too important to be dismissed in a sentence.

When we disentangle the story of Dunstan's treatment of the young King Edwy from the web of prejudice woven by monastic writers, Edwy seems to have been already married to a lady who was objectionable to the Ultramontane party because of a technical disqualification. She was within the distant degrees of consanguinity, unnaturally laid down at Rome,—perhaps the daughter of a foster-mother; we should assuredly have been told had there been any near relationship. The Witan had overruled the objection; even Odo had agreed to crown him. After the Coronation, Edwy made the boyish mistake of absenting himself from the feast before it was over, and resorting to the apartments of his wife and her mother; he was even perverse enough to refuse to come back when the Witan sent to beg him to come. Dunstan, with another bishop, was requested to fetch him: we are not told that he was ordered to do so by force. This, however, is what he did. Calling the queen, according to his admiring biographers, opprobrious names, which, as Dean Hook says in his 'Lives of the Archbishops of Canterbury,' might have fairly exposed him to the dagger of the young husband, he forced the crown on his head, and dragged him to the table by main force. Now, judging by all standards, ancient and modern, this was not a case of justifiable "rebuke," but of brutal violence; and though the king was only a youth of fifteen or sixteen, he was at least a crowned monarch.

The fact is, that this cruel act was typical of the impulsive and violent character of the man, which may be thus summed up. Of great ability and attractiveness, Dunstan was spoiled by a too early success and by the adulation of men and women. As an ecclesiastic he was placed far too young in great situations. We are not denying him the virtue of sincerity when we say that his natural ambition found an avenue to power in the ultra-sacerdotal doctrines of the party to which he had belonged from the first. It must be

admitted that he used the immense powers he acquired during Edgar's reign in doing good service to the State, and made amends in some degree for the anarchy of which he was the main cause in the reign of the priest-hunted and miserable Edwy. We cannot, however, forget that he was instrumental in placing the king's younger brother on the throne of the larger part of England while the elder was alive—in itself an act of treason; and if in his just banishment for this conduct he was not the soul of the party which divorced, and, as some say, horribly tortured Edwy's queen (though Odo was the responsible agent), circumstances are very much against him. The young king was soon out of the way; for he died, as there is every reason to think, of a broken heart. Reforms might be requisite, but the resisting party might well feel they could not be wrong in resisting this particular method; though indeed it is quite possible, if they had not been the weaker party, that they would have been as unscrupulous as their enemies. As it was, these ecclesiastical struggles were nothing more nor less than a form of civil war. That it did not attain, as far as an island war could, to the dimensions of the continental War of Investitures in the next century, fought for similar objects, was owing to the overwhelming strength of Dunstan and his party at the time of the death of Edwy in 958, and the subsequent close alliance between them and the new King Edgar, their puppet.

CHAPTER IX.

EDGAR, DUNSTAN, AND THE SECOND DANISH INVASION.

959-975. THERE can be no doubt that the young Edgar, by throwing himself into the arms of the dominant party, and accepting Dunstan, at the head of the celibate clergy, as his chief minister, owed his great position to that policy. As he was certainly guilty of far greater immorality than his unhappy elder brother, if indeed the latter was guilty at all, it might seem strange that so grave a censor of morals as Dunstan

should be able to work with him as he did. The mockery of the penance to which he was condemned is apparent enough; nor can we suppose that the delay of the Coronation was due to this cause. When Edgar was elected by the three Witans in 959, it would have been impolitic, after the struggles of Edwy's reign, to awaken the jealousies of the different parts of England by a Coronation. The grand ceremony, performed fourteen years later at Akemanceaster, or Bath, at which both archbishops assisted, was a token of the consummation of English unity.

What gives a colour to the view here accepted, is that the famous gathering of the eight kings with their fleets took place immediately afterwards. That was a well-authenticated and remarkable event, the highest external sign of English royalty attained before the days of Edward III. These kings, Kenneth of the Scots, Malcolm of Cumberland, and Maccus of Man, with five Welsh princes, "plighted their troth to Edgar, and swore they would be fellow-workers by land and sea." From Bath they sailed with him round Wales to Chester; nor is the story of their manning an eight-oared boat, and rowing him round from the Palace to St John's Church outside the walls, improbable. This triumph took place towards the end of but a short reign, the success of which, under the patronage of the dominant ecclesiastical faction, was chiefly due to the steady pursuit of the policy of Alfred's House. That policy was to govern the country, not directly (for which its mixed races were not ripe), but through and by means of the great ealdormen.

Both the ecclesiastical and the constitutional policy of the reign were in line with those of the Continent. The feudal system of Western Europe was already, in its elementary stage, fully at work. But, over and above the limits of that system, Edgar, inspired, as we may well believe, by Dunstan, took care to show the whole people that the government was strong, that he was king, and that justice, as well as warlike preparation, were not to be left to the caprice of the great ealdormen or their inferiors. Twice each year he "rode through every shire, inquiring into the law-dooms (or judgments) of the powerful men, and showing himself a severe avenger of any wrong done in the name of justice": and he took the best method of keeping up a navy which

might intercept invasion by making his fleets sail round the whole island once a year.

His policy towards Scotland was also sagacious and strong. In pursuance of the policy of his uncle Edred, who had passed Edinburgh over to the King of Scotland, and in connection with some claims of King Kenneth II., who began that series of incessant border-raids into English territory which the Tudors at last put down, Edgar ceded Lothian, the ancient Bernicia, to him, but with the proviso that the laws and language should be retained. This was done in the belief that the Lothians would be better governed when in friendly hands than as part of the English kingdom. How far it was a case of distinct vassalage is obscure. All such questions have been and are still the subjects of controversy; but Cnut, soon afterwards, took care there should be no mistake about it, when Malcolm in 1031 became his "man" for the Lothians. Thus Scotland —a kingdom of Scots, under a Scottish king—became in a social sense English, with Edinburgh for capital: and what is more, it took up Strathclyde, Fife, and the rest of the Lowlands, which were neither more nor less English than the Lothians. Scotland, in short, reached its limits in this century, embracing all we know by the name, except the Scandinavian earldoms of Caithness, Sutherland, and the Isles.

There is so much apparent dexterity, success, and renown attending on Edgar's statesmanship that, though contemporaries generally attributed it to himself, there has in modern times been a strong tendency to give all the credit to Dunstan —a circumstance in itself suspicious. However this may be, it is at least fair to remember the strong personal influence of the king in conciliating the settled Danes and treating them as Englishmen. This was a noble policy, and deserves comparison with Cnut's similar treatment of the English after his conquest. The chroniclers depreciate him for his partiality towards "outlandish men": it was his highest merit.

Edgar became the chief founder of the new Benedictine monasteries in Wessex, working along with Ethelwold the Bishop of Winchester, and Oswald Bishop of Worcester; but Dunstan himself was not conspicuous for such founda-

tions, and it may have been due to his caution that this rapid development was confined to Wessex. It was by these new monks and their successors that our chronicles were chiefly written, and the eulogies of Edgar and his great minister delivered; but the reaction from the contempt formerly poured upon their fulsome legends, has produced a modern estimate of Dunstan almost as partial as that of his superstitious followers. It is time to put him and other great English prelates into their proper place, neither denying their merits nor concealing their defects.

With regard to the effect of Dunstan's career on the celibacy of the clergy, it may be observed that it is on Eadmer's authority we learn that he established, and "confirmed by a decree, that all canons, all priests, all deacons and subdeacons, must either live in celibacy or resign the churches which they held, along with everything pertaining to them." He was, in fact, the English Hildebrand. It was easier to decree than to enforce; but at least he succeeded in making clerical marriage discreditable. The priest's wife got a very bad name; and both she and her husband lost that first of social virtues —self-respect. On the other hand, England owed to this strong man the suppression of separate ecclesiastical councils in each diocese. The bishops found their place in the Royal Council and the Witangemot. He has indeed been called the true founder of the English "political episcopate." Whether that has been a good thing is more than doubtful; but it cannot be denied that the superior education and ability of the bishops in those ages gave kings a very strong inducement to employ them in affairs of state.

Dunstan's career extends into the next two reigns. Edgar died in 975, and his two children, by different wives, repeated the story of himself and his brother. Again the elder came to an untimely end—this time by the murderous agency of his stepmother at Corfe Castle; but we also trace the close connection between Edward the Martyr's murder and the party which had been kept down by Dunstan during Edgar's reign, the party of the great ealdormen, chiefly of East Anglia. That party now gained the ascendant in the reign of Ethelred the Redeless (or Unready), and Dunstan was forced to retire into obscurity. It was then that he suffered as he had made others suffer; but no political confusion took place. This

of itself proves the error of associating Dunstan too exclusively, as some have done, with the prosperity of the realm. Nine years elapsed before the second Danish struggle began. His death seems to have had little to do with it. When, however, people came to experience the miseries of Ethelred's reign, they looked back with fond regret on Dunstan's administration under former kings, and gave it a glory which has certainly been most grossly exaggerated.

Perhaps this error has been partly due to an unscientific way of treating the second Danish invasion, which commenced in 971. It had taken three generations to break up, pulverise, and work into the soil, so to speak, the *débris* of the Danish mass left by that first inundation which swept over the land in the time of Ethelwolf. The process had been nearly completed when the new wave surged up still higher than the old. If Ethelred, instead of the weak king he was, had even been Alfred the Great himself, it is conceivable that it might have swept over the land just the same; for the new Danish hosts were great armies, escorted by great fleets, and led by great kings, and the united England of Edgar had only advanced to the stage of local and isolated tranquillity. There was order and fairly good government, but shire was still separated from shire; and when the trial came, they would afford no assistance to one another. No welding together had yet taken place: there was no such thing as a general patriotic feeling actuating the whole body, especially when the subdued Danelaw saw the attack proceeding from men of their own blood. Wessex itself was by no means consistently faithful to its royal House, and even the victories of that great warrior Edmund Ironsides could secure no more than a division of England into two halves, which at his death, a few months afterwards, were joined in one as the Danish kingdom of Cnut.

991–1016. The history of these twenty-five years (991-1016), which can alone be styled the "Danish Conquest," has little of the interest attending the struggle which raged under Ethelwolf and his sons and grandsons: not so the circumstances which impelled the new movements from the Baltic, on which a word must here be said. Mr Laing's translation of the 'Heimskringla,' already mentioned, supplies the history of the Norse heroes of this very time—Harold Harfager, Olaf

Tryggevesson, and St Olaf, and, more incidentally, of the great Danish kings, Sweyn and Cnut, each of whom in turn annexed Norway to Denmark. Here also we learn something about that aristocratic and cultivated branch of the Norsemen, the people of Iceland, the home of the "scalds," of whom the first may be considered the earliest prose writer in the European vernacular. Except for them, how little should we have understood the spirit which animated this people to whom every part of Northern Europe owes so much, these children of the dawn, whose relics fill the museums of Northern Europe. Where did they not penetrate? In Russia their redundant population planted itself so effectually that Ruric became the father of a dynasty which ruled for seven hundred years; and in the British Isles, during their victorious career, they wrote in blood an imperishable memorial.

At length these vigorous and enterprising people, after many attempts, found they could advance no further to the south of Scandinavia. Under Harold Harfager and Gorm the Old, respectively, those of them who had not migrated settled down in Norway and Denmark under some sort of law and order. It was Gorm who united the Baltic islands with Jutland, and it was the victories of the Emperor Henry I. in Germany over these Danes which forced them back on a country still much too small for them. That retreat led to the subsequent invasion of England. Under Harold Bluetooth, King of Denmark and Norway, they again attempted to swarm into Germany, but without success; and Sweyn, his son, was at Harold's death, in 981, at once king of the whole race of Northmen in Scandinavia, and inheritor from his father and grandfather of the policy of leading forth his people to some wider land. Thus the necessity for extension which operated on the smaller bodies of the eighth and ninth centuries now operated in the tenth on a whole people under a single king—a people inured to war, both civil and foreign, and in their early years of invasion not much less animated with a hatred of Christianity than the men who followed Guthrum, Hasting, and Halfdene; nor did that hatred disappear as quickly as we might expect, for the spectacle of their own kings in Scandinavia violently forcing their new faith at the point of the 861–931.

sword upon their heathen subjects as soon as they themselves had become Christians was by no means encouraging.

We conclude this brief sketch with the remark that the Wiking and the scald both disappeared about the same time, the end of the twelfth century. The Christian successors of Cnut, and the civilisation they introduced into Denmark, the establishment of parish priests, and a supply of English clergy — together aided to accumulate the law and history of the Scandinavian people in the hands of the clerical profession, and thus to extinguish the scalds. The rising German towns on the Baltic, and the Leagues which they organised, put an end to the roving propensities of the Wiking.

To state the main facts of this Second Invasion shortly, passing over some small piratical descents which occurred before 991, it was in that year that the brave Ealdorman Brightnoth was killed at the battle of Maldon. His East Saxon militia were routed by a great body of Norwegians, but a noble example was set on this occasion by the refusal of the English to buy off their enemy. In a few months that fatal policy began. It ended, as it only could end, in conquest—a lesson for all time that no people eat their own bread long unless the men are ready to fight for it, and the women to send them forth to battle.

Whether the fleets of Edgar could have availed against the new Danish armaments, which we find had been brought to a high pitch of perfection by years of experience, we cannot tell; but both ships and seamen seem to have disappeared, and Ethelred had to begin afresh, partly by taking Danish squadrons into pay, and partly by means of the famous Danegelt—a contribution towards a fleet from every shire in proportion to the number of hides it contained. This took time to organise, and was not really at work till 1008. It was the first instance of national taxation in England, and the parent of the "land-tax" which continued down to the last century. But how was this new fleet to imbibe discipline and experience under the terrible pressure of the annual attacks of these persistent enemies? The fact is that England, though fully warned, was taken by surprise, and was never given time to recover itself. Besides all these disadvantages the system of delegated authority placed too

much power in the hands of local officers, and no less than two of the greatest chiefs—Alfric and Edric Streona—were consummate traitors. When led by a Brightnoth or an Ulfkytel, the English still fought with the old spirit, and there can be no better proof of their high qualities than their courage under such dispiriting circumstances.

Let us put the blame of all this on the right shoulders. Ethelred has to carry a heavy load of it for his incompetence; but as for buying off the Danes, it is right to remember that his whole Witan, and especially his chief Minister, Archbishop Sigeric, were the first to propose it. Conquest was the only remedy for such national delinquency. Nor was the preparation of England for any united action much improved even in 1066. The explanation is, that the social and military bonds of pre-Norman England were much too loose, and the State too ill-compacted at both periods—Ethelred's and Harold's alike. Egbert's work had been paralysed, even in the hands of his manly successors, by the continuous invasion of the Danes. There was plenty of fine material. It had to be ground in the Norman mill, ground small, and then prepared afresh, by a mixture of blood and a mixture of constitutional systems, for the extraordinary career awaiting the people of the British Isles.

CHAPTER X.

THE DANISH SOVEREIGNTY.

In addition to the many causes of the success of the Danish Conquest already operating, came the defection of Wales, which now saw its opportunity, and began to league itself with the Norsemen under Meredith, son of Owen. This was the third great prince in succession (Roderick the Great and Howel Dda being the others) to unify Wales under provincial divisions by the names of Gwynnedh (or North Wales), Dynevor (or South Wales), and Powys in the centre-Gwynnedh, in consequence of its defensible mountains, be.

gan to assume the leading place, and held its independence, though acknowledging English suzerainty, till the reign of Edward I. But long before that date the campaigns of Harold, son of Godwin, reduced the whole country to feudal vassalage in 1063: and soon afterwards Dynevor, as well as Gwent, which in the tenth century had come to form the third division with Gwynnedh and Dynevor, were overrun by Norman and Flemish settlers, introduced by the Norman kings.

The Dukes of Normandy claim a leading place in any outlines however brief, for (though this is little more than a phrase) the Norman Conquest is not unfrequently said to date from the marriage of Ethelred with Emma of Normandy
996–1026. in 1002. Richard the Good, grandfather of the Conqueror, and the fourth Duke of his House, was a prince of the highest character, who by sagacious government and skilful alliances had greatly strengthened his Duchy, and amalgamated his people with the conquered French. They had now completely fallen into the feudal system of the age, giving up their Norse Assemblies, and gathering round the castles of the new nobility. Indeed, the clergy and the women of the province had so powerfully influenced the rude heathen settlers that in the third generation it is said that not a trace of heathenism could be found amongst them. The close alliance which had subsisted between the Dukes and the Carlovingian House was still more carefully retained with the new House of Capet and with Paris their capital, which had become famous as the bulwark of France against these very Norsemen.

It should be observed here that the rise of London to be the capital of England was scarcely earlier than the rise of Paris to be the capital of France. London had been steadily growing under Alfred and his successors; but it was the capacity it showed in the final Danish struggle for becoming the military centre of the land, which raised it from a mere fortified commercial town to the first place in the realm. Since its fine resistance to Sweyn and Cnut its career has never once faltered. It soon left the ancient capital of Wessex far behind. The same persistence through all vicissitudes is the glory of Paris.

It was in 994 that Sweyn and Olaf Tryggevesson, while

still in friendly relations with one another, sailed up the Thames, and found the defence of London too strong for them. The ports of Normandy supplied their wants, and Ethelred failed to make any effective retaliation on their Norman allies. But Duke Richard, making allowance for this hasty policy, began to discover that such neighbours as the Danes across the Channel, especially when Sweyn, with his victorious troops, was returning to a more deadly assault on England, would be a bad exchange for the pacific English: and Ethelred's first wife, mother of Edmund Ironsides, being dead, the new alliance was cemented by the king's second marriage in 1002 with Emma of Normandy.

This remarkable woman, wife of two kings in succession, and mother of two kings, beautiful and religious, the type of Franco-Norman culture, played a considerable part in history. Through her marriage it came to pass that Normandy became the refuge of the English royal family from the Danes, and the place of education of Edward the Confessor, her son, who himself became the living link between the people of the two countries: and Emma's great-nephew was the destined conqueror of the island. The Massacre of St Brice's Day, which on no sufficient ground has been connected with this marriage, was not quite so bad as usually represented. There is reason to believe that the report of a conspiracy amongst the Danes, who were settled in Wessex (and it only applied to that province), was not groundless, and the massacre, horrible as it was, was the result of a panic, for which the Witan was, to some extent at least, responsible. Unlike the Sicilian Vespers, its only effect was to strengthen the enemy. Sweyn now adopted the policy of his predecessors in the first invasion, that of mastering East Anglia and making it his base of operations. In this, after a fierce resistance, he succeeded; but Ethelred might yet have held out had he not fallen under the spell of a too clever minister, Edric Streona, his son-in-law.

This man the king made his chief adviser; nor can we wonder at it, for Edric was a statesman of mark, as the following facts prove. We must certainly admit that it required no little talent to establish national institutions at such a time: yet, this was what he did. To him was due the Danegelt already mentioned, a rough and ready tax, necessary

for the times: to him the formation of the "Hoard," or Treasury, of which the present "Treasury" is the legitimate descendant: to him, above all, the oath of fealty to the king, now exacted, at least in theory, from all subjects. Yet the remarkable man who could thus, during a short truce, organise a sinking realm on the basis of honour and public spirit, was himself a traitor of the deepest dye. Possibly, if we knew all, we might solve the riddle. We at least perceive that the sensitive and perilous condition of the Danelaw was a large ingredient in these mysterious proceedings.

We may now sum up the remainder of the story of the conquest,—remarking by the way that Sandwich, with its then noble bay, long since choked up with sand, gradually became the pivot on which the Danish strategy turned. When the Danes were absent, Ethelred made it the rendezvous for the fine fleet raised by Danegelt; but the eventual Danish success raised it to the rank of the first seaport in England, and laid the foundation of the Cinque Port Confederacy, for which the Kentish and Sussex ports had been long preparing.

When the four lines of policy on which the English relied had been tried long enough to prove that they could only lead to disaster, when the massacre of St Brice, the perpetually recurring payment of bribes levied by the tax called at first Danegeld—a name which soon came to be applied to the provision for shipping—when the Norman alliance, and the hiring of Danish ships and seamen, had done nothing, and plainly could do nothing but neutralise their own more manly resolutions of self-defence,—just then, in 1013, the dreaded King Sweyn appeared in the Humber with an overwhelming force. Now at last the Danelaw, hitherto restrained by conflicting interests, rose and joined the invaders. With the forces of Northumbria, East Anglia, and the Five Boroughs at his disposal, the King of Denmark and Norway overran Wessex before the end of the year. Even London, though it did not admit his troops, had to submit; and the royal family escaped with all speed to Normandy. However, at the very moment of the conquest the conqueror died, and England, relieved for a moment from pressure, recalled Ethelred, its king. This gave time to Edmund Ironsides, his famous son, to organise at the critical moment such means of re-

sistance as were yet possible. It is a pity we know no more of the details. When Cnut returned in 1015 with a new and immense fleet, there commenced a war of giants. Five great battles in one year recalled the days of Ethelred and Alfred, and proclaimed that great soldiers were at the head of battalions, equally disciplined and both desperate.

The names of the localities supply a few hints, but we know little beyond the fact of the fighting. Rallying, like Alfred, in the west, each victory brought Edmund nearer to the headquarters of Cnut in the south-east. The first battle was won by Edmund at Pen Selwood, in Somersetshire; the second was a drawn battle with great slaughter at Sherstone, in Wilts; the third was won again by Edmund at Brentford; so also was the fourth at Otford, in Kent; but the fruit of these astonishing victories was lost in the fifth at Ashendun, or Ashdown, in Essex, near Saffron-Walden, the heaviest fight of all, where the English at last went down. The Chronicle says: "Here all the English nation fought against Cnut;" "here all the nobles of the English race were destroyed." Bishops and ealdormen, alike animated by the heroic spirit of their king, but with ranks fatally thinned by each victory, fell beneath the Danish axe: yet Edmund, with almost miraculous courage, again threw himself on the support of the gallant west-country men, and rallied round him once more so great a force in Worcestershire that Cnut found it best to come to terms. Once more the kingdom was divided as in former times into two halves at the Peace of Olney, an island on the Severn, near Gloucester. Alfred the Great and Robert Bruce have alone in English history shown a heroism which can be compared with that of Edmund Ironsides.

Edric Streona's betrayal of the English had once more made the struggle hopeless. Yet he was concerned in organising the final resistance, and must receive a full meed of praise for his share in the peace. But his time had come: he now suffered the penalty of a cunning and tortuous policy. Cnut could hardly but make him one of his four ruling earls; yet he showed his barbaric judgment in despatching him without trial when he afforded a first suspicion of playing his old game. Suspicion again has always attached to him in relation to the death of Edmund Ironsides, which

took place just after the peace; but we know nothing certain about it. Here Edmund II., the fifth of the series with which we are now concerned, passes away, opportunely for Cnut; but his noble blood has come through his granddaughter Margaret, Queen of Scotland, to the royal House of England. She is one of the few canonised saints whose right to the epithet has never been disputed, for she was the civiliser of the barbarous Scots. Through her the name of Margaret became familiar and fashionable.

The remaining five kings of the series form a group of their own. The sudden and extraordinary change which took place in Cnut within the year after his accession may perhaps be chiefly due to his marriage with Ethelred's widow, the Norman Emma. Up to that time he had been no better than the brutal kings described in the Sagas: after it he shines as one of the brightest lights which ever illuminated the English throne. Nothing proves his excellence more than his celebrated letter, written from Rome in 1027. As to his English policy, the obstinate resistance of the people under Edmund Ironsides taught him a lesson which was read in exactly the reverse way by William I. He resolved to place the four established provinces of the country not under Danish but under English earls, while he kept Wessex, the ruling State, under his own direct government, placing Godwin over it as his deputy. His sagacity in so doing is proved by the quiet and order which immediately succeeded his Coronation in London; by his being able to leave the country in two years, while he established himself in Denmark; and eleven years later, by his success in using English troops to wrest Norway from St Olaf, so making himself Emperor of the North.

1017–1035.

The contrast between Cnut's easy success, and the necessity under which William found himself to keep the English down by force, requires a little more notice than it usually obtains. It certainly cannot be simply accounted for by his sagacious choice of English earls, or by his establishment of a "good peace," or his wise adoption of English law, or his patronage of the monks, because, on these latter points, William's policy was much the same. The real causes are rather to be found in the exhaustion of England after twenty-five years of war, and in the good re-

lations which Cnut cultivated with the English people, whom he not only placed under English earls, but whom he courted and left to themselves, and to whose religion and national heroes he paid public respect. Thus the terrible past was forgotten in an incredibly short space of time. Still further, Cnut was wise enough to make no agrarian nor social change in England, while William forced every Englishman into a state of vassalage, either to himself or his nobles. Add to this Cnut's wise organisation of the land-tax, his system of Royal Chancellors (carried further by the Confessor), his formation of a guard of huscarles and a naval force of buscarles, as also the political use he made of his bishops,—and the phenomenon is accounted for. His respectful treatment of the clergy and monks was a genuine outcome of Christian spirit, and was repeated with excellent results in Denmark, where English priests were selected for the new Danish bishoprics, an ecclesiastical connection which should not be forgotten.

The "Empire of the North" did not outlast the life of this great man, and such memories soon passed away. In 1036, the year after his death, Norway threw off the yoke, taking Magnus, son of St Olaf, for king (half-brother of the famous Harold Hardrada); and on Harthacnut's death in 1042, the Danish connection altogether sank away with the rising of the star of Normandy. Like Alfred the Great and Edgar, Cnut is said to have been a small man,—at least not of heroic frame, like most of those who in rude ages achieve fame and carve out empire.

Lastly, Cnut cannot be blamed for the banishment to Hungary of the two young sons of Edmund Ironsides, Edmund and Edward; but Alfred and Edward, the two sons of King Ethelred and the Norman Emma, were much more difficult rivals to deal with, being accepted by the Normans as princes of their own blood, and as pledges of the Norman claims on their future England. We must then again direct our attention to the Duchy. Duke Richard III. had succeeded Richard the Good in 1026, and spent his short reign of two years in conflict with his younger brother, Robert the Devil, who succeeded him. With that Robert came a distinct policy of preparation for a Norman annexation of England, corresponding to the movement of inferior Norman

chiefs who were forming kingdoms in the South of Europe. Gradually developing their strength, first at the town of Aversa, and from thence over the province of Apulia, then at the battle of Civitella, in 1053, next in the conquest of South Italy, in 1060, and of Sicily a little later, it was of a piece with this adventurous Norman spirit that Robert should attempt an invasion of England in the interest of his cousins Alfred and Edward. The precise year of that event is not known, but the expedition was wrecked off Jersey; and William the Bastard, Robert's son by Arlotta, was quite old enough to know all about it. Thus the youth grew up, penetrated with the full belief entertained by his family and people that the Danes who had conquered England were mere interlopers, whose government was to be superseded as soon as possible. The old English rights had, they believed, merged, not in the Danish House but in the Normans, who had been lying by, and who would see that the English youths, their wards, had justice. They held themselves their heirs. With this settled conviction in their minds, Godwin and Harold, as representing the Danes, were of course their natural enemies.

1017–1053. The great Earl Godwin's career must be taken along with those of Cnut and his successors. For the whole nineteen years of the Danish conqueror's memorable reign he was in high favour. A self-made man, thoroughly capable, courageous, eloquent, and a courtier, he supplied well what Edric Streona had supplied ill. As *Secundarius regis*, and Earl of Wessex, he was prepared and intended by Cnut to be the prop of his dynasty. Like the "Justiciar" of later times, he was the official Regent in the king's absence. This great position he held, with the short interval of his banishment, till his death in 1053, when he handed it on to his son, Harold.

Harold I., son of Cnut by Elgiva, and Harthacnut, his son by Queen Emma, were placed, by the great Witan assembled at Oxford, over the northern and southern portions of England respectively; but Harold, during Harthacnut's absence in Denmark, was acting in some sort of superior position over Godwin's Wessex, when the event occurred which coloured subsequent history.

Alfred, and some say Edward, afterwards the king, came from Normandy to visit Queen Emma, their mother; but as they

were almost unattended, they were easily led into a trap. If Edward came, which is uncertain, he escaped; but Alfred was caught and blinded in Godwin's earldom, at Guildford, soon afterwards dying at Ely. It was said that the crime was committed by Harold I.'s orders; but Godwin must have delivered him up. He always denied his guilt, and at a later date publicly cleared himself of it; but his memory has always suffered from the accusation. Edward the Confessor, Emma his mother, and the Normans generally, persistently believed it, and held the Godwin family to be murderers. The writer of the Chronicle believed it. The truth cannot be discovered from existing materials, and remains a matter of opinion. Soon afterwards Harold I. died at Oxford, and Harthacnut was invited to the throne. He reigned only two years, and died ingloriously "as he stood at his drink."

So passed away the blood of the great Cnut; and the English gladly turned to Edward, son of Ethelred and Queen Emma, now aged 41. Godwin, whose position with the Danish house had thus suddenly and unexpectedly come to an end, had now to accept a half-Norman master, very much against his will.

CHAPTER XI.

EDWARD THE CONFESSOR, GODWIN, AND HAROLD II.

EDWARD THE CONFESSOR'S reign is so inextricably bound up with the careers of Godwin and Harold that the lives of the three men must necessarily be regarded together. Here, also, as in the case of Dunstan, we have to thread our way between discordant views, very positively expressed. 1042-1066.

Godwin's death in 1053 clearly divides the reign into two parts. During the first part Edward is said to have been the mere puppet of the father; during the second, of the son. There are very serious objections to this view. The king, no doubt, found Godwin much too firmly seated in the

government, owing to the position in which Cnut had placed him—a sort of viceroy—to be peaceably displaced; and so he took a characteristic line of his own. He made it his business to work with him as far as he possibly could. Whether his course was the best or not, he must not be denied credit for the good government of the reign. He felt his responsibility, and was conscientious to a fault. Doubtless if he had been an ideal prince, of strong character, he would have asserted his mastership at once: the gentle Edward preferred to wait,—preferred anything to civil war; not indeed quite anything, for we see there were limiting conditions, tacit or expressed. Nothing was to be suffered which might bring back the Danes, and his name was not to be used for anything outrageously shocking to his sense of right. That his policy was anti-Danish, and Godwin's Danish, was no crime on either side; but Edward took care to have his own way on that one great cardinal point, and yet he continued to keep the land at peace,—peace for twenty-three years,—a wonderful fact in that stormy time.

To accomplish this end he behaved like a prince and like a man in taking command of his own fleets when King Magnus threatened him from Norway, and he steadily supported his ally, the Emperor, against the Count of Flanders; while it must be observed that during this time Godwin and his family were generally caballing with the king's enemies, the Danes and the Flemings, and amongst them they found ready refuge when they brought matters to such a point that they had to fly their country. Again, it was Edward who, devoting himself to sea-affairs, refused to owe his fleets to the unpopular ship-money, and established the system of the Cinque Ports in its stead, thus laying securely the foundations of English maritime greatness.[1] Though he had to submit to the control which Godwin exercised over the royal huscarles—a sufficient degradation—he resolved to be at least personally free, and so established himself at London, leaving his mother, now wholly Danish, and allied with Godwin, to live at the old capital, Winchester. During Harold's time Edward was much more like a king than he could be during Godwin's life, and the son was much more

[1] See for this and subsequent notices of that remarkable institution, 'The Cinque Ports,' *Historic Towns Series*. (Longmans.)

like a Prime Minister than the father. The belauded legislation of the Confessor is not indeed more than a fresh edition of the laws made by Edgar and Cnut; but he infused into them a spirit of mercy and piety.

Even the two faults which leave most mark against his character are exaggerations of good. His ideas of self-denial, interpreted after the model of monastic excellence, involved him in the absurdity of living the life of a single man, though married,—(at least this is the so-called virtue for which the monks praise him), and thus destroyed the hope of succession. And secondly, seriously believing that the Norman family were his heirs, he made no effort to restrain his Norman predilections, an obvious offence to at least the Danish part of his subjects. Hence the so-called patriotism of Godwin and his House, which, however, is so intimately mixed up with their turbulence and ambition, that it has to be considerably discounted. It must of course be taken into account that the English could have expected nothing else than that Edward should speak the language and love the superior culture of the people amongst whom he had been brought up, but no doubt it would have been the policy of a statesman to conceal these sympathies; and the Norman courtiers were not likely to make things better by the display of conciliatory qualities.

But we must beware of representing even the conduct of Edward's Norman friends unfairly. When the quarrel between Eustace, Count of Boulogne, Edward's brother-in-law, and the men of Dover occurred, the case was not by any means decisively strong against Eustace. It was natural that Godwin should make the worst of it; but a loyal subject, when ordered to punish the offenders, might have appealed to the Witan, if on inquiry he had found them innocent and the king obstinate. He chose to rebel. Edward now behaved with spirit, and summoning to his side the loyal earls, found himself backed by the country. Godwin's troops melted away, and he sought safety in flight. His protection of his son, Sweyn, who had been guilty of various shameful crimes, had shocked the moral sense of the nation. What sort of patriotism his son Harold possessed was shown during his banishment by his frightful carnage of innocent Somerset men at the head of his allies, the Ostmen.

There are again two sides to the story of the conduct of the Normans whom Edward naturally placed in power during the exile of Godwin. He certainly cannot be blamed for appointing his friend and chief councillor, Robert of Jumiéges, to the see of Canterbury, instead of the priest whom Godwin had audaciously sought to place there against Edward's will; nor is it fair to blame Robert for deserting his post on Godwin's return, or because his armed servants guarded their master when he was attacked upon his flight. In short, the only proper way of regarding this period is to treat the struggle as a sort of duel, which must have taken place some time or other, between a king who would not be abased below a certain point, and a subject who acted like a Carlovingian "Mayor of the Palace," and aspired to found a dynasty. Edward and he triumphed alternately. It was the visit of the terrible Norman Bastard to England during Godwin's absence which turned the scale, for we cannot but see that it produced a vague terror which after-events justified; and the people, now shifting round again, showed their preference for their old earls in spite of their faults. It was in that spirit they had borne so long with the ambition of this family, displayed in the barefaced strokes of policy which placed earldoms, one after another, in their dexterous hands. It was in that spirit, when Edward boldly confronted with far inferior forces his too powerful subjects on their return, that both nobles and people gladly accepted a compromise in the dismissal of the Norman archbishop, under which arrangement peace was preserved till the great earl died next year. It should be observed that this very expulsion of the archbishop to please Godwin turned out to be one main cause of the Norman Conquest; for the Popes never forgot it.

However, when Godwin's career is fairly balanced, it yet remains that he was a great English minister,—on certain points not to be compared with some of the series, but perhaps as able as any. On the one hand, he was too much wanting in noble qualities to obtain any very high place in the niche of fame; on the other, that he was the trusted friend of Cnut is perhaps his greatest distinction.

Harold having had scant justice done him by Norman chroniclers, has had more than justice done to him of late. His noble death may well cover many faults; but no one

can deny his undisguised and persistent resolution to become Edward's successor, to the exclusion of the old English line as well as that of the great Norman, who was also waiting his time. It would be wrong to blame too much the father and son, who, conscious of their power to rule, grasped at the Crown; but it deprives them of the place reserved for really great men who have learnt to control personal ambition. That Harold contrived for a space of twelve years to suit himself to the temper of his king is high praise, and his successful Welsh campaigns did him great honour. Otherwise his administration is obscure,—perhaps that is a good thing to say of it,—and his record is by no means clear as to his relations with his brother Tostig.

We have one characteristic act in Harold's foundation of Waltham Collegiate Church for secular canons which may be placed to his credit, and which shows that, like his father, he belonged to the anti-monastic party; whereas the king was a monk upon the throne. But we hear exceedingly little of such donations from either Godwin or Harold; and considering their immense wealth and power, the absence of such is freely noted by contemporaries: while on the other hand they are not free from the charge of pillaging Church property. These keen politicians were in fact by no means of an ecclesiastical turn.

The vexed question of Harold's morality in the matter of the oath taken in Normandy to support William the Bastard's claim to the English throne, cannot be settled off-hand. His greatest admirers admit that there was something in the nature of an oath, which seriously compromised him; but they excuse him on the ground that it was taken under duress. The case must be judged, not by arguments which might apply to-day, but by the moral sense of the times. It certainly had the effect of placing William in the right with the Pope (who already had his grievance), with the bishops, the monks, the clergy, the devout,—in short, with the public opinion of the day,—and of course with the Normans generally: it as certainly paralysed the English. In the eyes of Europe, William invaded England as the avenger of right, the champion of the Church, and the upholder of family claims to inheritance. Harold's stoutest supporters on the ground of the national right of election felt that they were

fighting a desperate battle for a perjured man. Thus the highest tribute that can be paid to the son of Godwin is that he rallied the country round him at all.

The whole of Harold's nine months' reign was occupied in watching for the Norman Invasion and fighting the two great battles, of Stamford Bridge with Harold Hardrada and Tostig, of Hastings with William. It was now that his position as king, built up with so much care, betrayed its inherent weakness. Very naturally he could not trust the great earls, whose loyal support might, and probably would, have been given to Edgar Atheling, if Harold had set the example instead of taking his place: and the acknowledged headship of even a raw youth, by no means deficient in courage, might have sufficed to rally the country round the banner of England. Thus it was that no army could be levied in the north. Thus Harold alone could command the troops which were to resist William, and he could not be in two places at once. This forms the only excuse for the otherwise unpardonable blunder of leaving the coast, when he found the provisions of his fleet run short, open to invasion, trusting to the desperate chance that such a man as William the Bastard might give up the expedition.

1066. It is said that the responsibility of accepting the Crown, and with it the engagements which he could not meet, is removed from Harold's shoulders by the Witan's choice. But it is a larger question than this. Who had deliberately made it scarcely possible for the Witan to do anything else? If, however, justice compels us to supply the darker shades which make the picture faithful to reality, we should be inexcusable if we did not admit that as a gallant soldier, fighting to the death for England against the foreign invader, Harold will always have a grand place in the list of national heroes. He must have it. It is perhaps the finest thing in English history, that noble stand, with a half-disciplined, half-armed force, against the organised host of France and Normandy, led by the greatest captain of the age. In all other respects, morally, religiously, and politically, Harold was neither better nor worse than his contemporaries. As Mr Green has said: "The character of the man and of his rule is to be gathered, not from the hour of heroic struggle, but from the years that preceded it." Well was it for

England that he was no greater man than this analysis seems to prove. To his inevitable failure we owe the infusion of the finer Norman blood into the English and Danish composition, the widespread European interests, the thousand benefits which, after the day of adversity was past, made the conquered people glory in their checkered history.

As to the place of Edward the Confessor in history, the last of a glorious dynasty, it would be easy to show how the changing fashions of historical writing have tended to depreciate him below his proper level. Something of his kingliness has come out already in our sketch. Negatively he deserves praise for never having abdicated, like other monkish kings. He at least never ran away from his work, but faced his enemies boldly at every crisis, knowing that the hearts of the people of England, though for the moment drawn away, were really with him, and that he was actuated by no unworthy motives in holding his crown till death should release him from the burden. It was not so strange as we might think, that he was beloved by the English people in spite of his overstrained monasticism. They loved his cheerful, courteous manners; they liked to look upon the handsome face of the son of the handsome Ethelred and the beautiful Emma, and they pitied the gentle king for having to live with the rough people who surrounded him. They believed in his gifts of healing, for they were appropriate to a man of prayer and holy life, and were a part of his love of the poor. They sympathised with his passion for hunting; they recognised the impulse he gave to architecture, his liberality to monasteries and churches, his active improving spirit in the introduction of charters into land transactions, and his establishment, on a firm basis, of the Royal Chancery (it was he who first brought in the seal, pendant to deeds); above all, they valued the good peace he gave to England. That, in those rough times, was, after all, the one great want. After his death there was nothing but war and distress for some generations, and when the people clamoured for Edward the Confessor's laws, they not unnaturally magnified his share in making what was really in substance the law of England as known for some generations before the Conquest.

The idea that Edward resigned the government to Harold after Godwin's death, is perhaps founded on nothing more

than the premature old age and illness which crept upon him during the last two or three years of his life. We know next to nothing of the details of the second part of his reign. But we may conclude this difficult subject by the remark that it was well that the six centuries of English and Danish history should close with two representative men,—Harold the soldier-statesman, and Edward the royal saint, both English, and yet each closely connected with one of the two neighbouring nationalities. They form a double border-line between strongly coloured divisions of English history which thus shade off into one another without abruptness. The mixed English and Danes had been too long settled to brook either Norman or Danish interlopers. Here Harold represented them: they could have dealt with either one of the invaders, but they were not united enough to make common cause under him against both together,—for this was what Harold Hardrada's invasion with Tostig actually signified. William owed his success to that just-previous invasion. Could Harold, had he been the victor, have welded the population together as Cnut was welding it throughout his reign? Every one must form his own opinion. William at any rate did weld it together by the strongest of all cements, —however distressing to his new subjects,—by uniform and strong government, and by a fresh development of the Feudal System, which as yet had been in England too feeble to do its work. It was now to be applied by the hand of a master, in a style far superior to anything ever seen in the lands of its birth.

CHAPTER XII.

THE NORMAN CONQUEST.

We must not dismiss the subject of Harold's defence of England without a word upon the last determined effort of the Scandinavian race to follow up their long-continued movements upon the British Isles. The expedition of Harold Hardrada (or the Stark, or Severe) along with Tostig,

Harold's turbulent brother, is liable to be lost sight of in the more vivid glare of the battle of Hastings. Yet, if it had not been that Harold's rapid march caught the invaders unarmed, how nearly were they successful! We ought at least to study, as we may in Laing's 'Heimskringla,' the previous career of the Norse giant, which was more romantic than any achieved by, or even invented for, the knights-errant of later days. It will be seen how critical a moment in his career this was. The long restless years of incessant battle with his neighbours only came to an end at that precise time, so as to set Hardrada free for his last and fatal campaign, in which hopes, well-founded enough, of renewing Cnut's Northern Empire were destroyed in a day. If Hardrada had prevailed, if he had marched south, with many an Anglo-Dane to swell his forces, who can say whether, in the shock of Norseman and Norman, he would not have founded the dynasty which was reserved for William? It was not to be. England was not to be thrown back a hundred years by the fresh admixture of a semi-barbarous portion of the old stock, but to be urged forward by a branch of it which had been planted out and educated, as it might seem, during the previous two centuries, for this express purpose.

William's preparation for his work, though of a less adventurous kind than Hardrada's, was equally complete. Like him he possessed that genius for war which never failed to give him victory; and his life of conflict, suspicion, and trouble made him equally "stark." Like him, too, he had risen superior to all his foes just in time to take advantage of Edward the Confessor's death. Instead of Saracen Emirs and Kings of Denmark, he had spent his life in conflict with Counts of Anjou and Kings of France; but his victories of Val ès Dunes in 1047, of Alençon and Domfront in 1048, lifted him quite above former dukes, and prepared him to assert his right to the hand of Matilda of Flanders against the authority of even popes and bishops. They had hitherto been arrayed against him on much the same grounds as they considered sufficient to justify them in tearing away Elgiva from King Edwy. Moreover, the easy victory of the Normans of Apulia in 1053 over the feeble forces of the two Emperors of the East and of the West at the battle of Civitella gave William his opportunity. The Pope was taken prisoner

by the Normans, and the Duke of Normandy could now persuade Baldwin of Flanders to let him carry off Matilda as his bride—not without, it would seem, a decent show of resistance on her part. We are hardly called upon to credit the story of his knocking her down and dragging her round the room by the hair. The act was audacious enough without these accessories, and raised once more against the Duke his old enemy, Henry of France. Once more, however, William conquered him at Mortemer. He was then free—free just at this time to watch, with his keen vigilant eye, the waning breath of his kinsman, the Confessor.

We have arrived, then, at the Conquest. The late Mr Freeman has written fully upon this subject, and we need not repeat what can be learned from certain chapters of his volumes. We will even pass over the story of the Invasion, and the battle of Hastings; for, thrilling with the deepest interest as they are, they are perfectly well known, and cover only a few disputed points. A careful study of the Bayeux Tapestry, and of some professed exposition of it, like that of Mr Bruce, is, however, very desirable. In these chapters we will confine ourselves to some of the less obvious aspects of the great event.

The Norman Conquest has, of course, to be read in the light of the preceding history. Besides mastering the personal character and life of the Conqueror, we have to set his turbulent Normandy in the larger framework of a turbulent Europe, which naturally led up to just such an enterprise as that of William. The striking parallel presented by that European condition of affairs with the condition of Hellas and the Troad, familiarised to us by Homer, is worth a moment's attention.

The First Crusade may appear to present a still more just parallel, but this Invasion of England, though on a smaller scale, was a distinct adumbration of the Crusade which took place a generation later. It had been ostentatiously announced on the part of the invaders as a religious war; it was blessed by Pope, bishops, and clergy, in order to avenge religious and ecclesiastical outrages: the force was drawn from a wide circle outside the central Normandy—from Burgundy, Poitou, Aquitaine, Brittany, and Flanders. The conquest was only begun at the battle of Hastings: England,

like Troy, was not conquered for several years. The ruling class of these countries, like the Achæan chiefs,—soldiers trained for war, and with very little else to do,—gathered round the new Agamemnon with their vassals, who may be compared to the Argives—chiefs just as independent, just as subordinate as, and no more than, those of the 'Iliad,' and contrasted, much as they were, with the English Hector and his kin in the last struggle for hearth and home. The tedious waiting months at Aulis run parallel with those at St Valéry,—the overpowering sense of the magnitude of the issue, the long-standing feuds which were thus closed, and the charges of perfidy. Nor were the consequences of the victory and the changes effected in Europe much less important, when compared with the results of the Trojan War to Greece and Asia. Lastly, the story has come down in each case from the victors; yet the sympathy which is drawn from our hearts in each case is with the vanquished—with the mutilated Harold, and with the noble Hector dragged round the walls of Troy.

The Bayeux Tapestry, representing, as it does, one of the chief authorities for the Conquest, both as to facts and motives, supplies us with a text for the religious changes introduced by William and Lanfranc. The importance of their ecclesiastical policy in relation to the actual history of England grows out of the religious character of the Invasion, and is so significant and so interesting that it may in these chapters take precedence of the secular history which is familiar to all, and requires less comment. The Tapestry, which gives the Norman view of the Invasion, discloses the perfidy and sacrilege of Harold, as well as the outrage on the Church involved in his coronation by "Stigand, Archbishop"; though as a matter of fact he was really crowned by Aldred, Archbishop of York. The pictured story closes with the punishment of the profane traitor on the heights of Battle. Well did Queen Matilda and Odo, the authors of this great work, still to be seen at Bayeux, understand the real history of their success. The Roman See had taken Normandy under its wing, just in the same way as it had selected the victorious Normans of Italy as its defenders against the forces of the struggling Empire, represented by the Franconian house. England was in dire disgrace.

The action of Normandy and its Duke was the action of Rome, the stretching out of her right hand against the enemy. This requires a little further explanation.

The various conflicts which had taken place in England upon the ever-vexed question of the celibacy of the clergy had after all ended favourably for their wives. Godwin and Harold had certainly not favoured the opposite side;—probably they had supported the recalcitrants. The Confessor's monastic sympathies and personal practice had indeed been respected,—for, as we have said, he was on many grounds extensively beloved,—but they had not been extensively copied. Further, the disgrace of England in Papal eyes had not been incurred by mere general antipathies: the ejection of Robert de Jumiéges was a standing grievance at Rome; and Archbishop Stigand had even taken the opposite side to Lanfranc and the great body of the continental Church on the question of Transubstantiation. This had been recently raised by Berengarius of Tours, who had insisted upon the older doctrine of the Eucharist; but the novel explanation of the mystery, which Paschasius had introduced, prevailed at Rome. Worse than all, the English had for some years neglected to pay Peter's pence. The stubborn islanders thus seemed to be hopelessly independent, and it was felt to be high time that their system of ecclesiastical government by Church and State, which obviously lay at the root of the mischief, should be swept away. That such a thing was possible was owing to the fact that the culmination of what is called Ultramontanism at Rome and amongst the continental clergy was synchronous with the rise of the Normans to the highest place in Europe as fighting men.

Again, as Archdeacon of Rome, the indefatigable Hildebrand had for many years, while subordinate to Popes Leo IX., Nicholas II., and Alexander II., been pushing forward all over Europe his policy of strict monasticism and clerical celibacy, in preparation for the work which awaited him as Gregory VII. The last of those Popes, Alexander II., a sworn enemy of the married clergy, publicly blessed William the Bastard's banner, and making it a Papal enterprise, enabled him to enlist troops from scattered provinces far outside the limits of Normandy. Nor should it be for-

gotten that Normandy itself was exceptionally fitted to lead the Pope-blessed host, for the strictest monasticism had long formed the leading feature of its religion. That system was powerfully represented in chief at this time by the Abbey of Bec, of which Lanfranc was Abbot, and by the Abbey of Fécamp, which, lying close under the eye of the Norman dukes, was largely endowed with Sussex lands by Edward the Confessor, the ward of Normandy. Strangely enough, the only difficulty lay with the only man who could have led the Papal host, the headstrong William himself, who had already by his marriage defied the Papacy, and who showed his independence in no halting form when he resettled the affairs of England; but it would have taken a great deal to check his deep designs, and he had already been half-tamed by the dauntless Lanfranc. Selecting that abbot as his archbishop and chief adviser, they together adopted such a system as might best work out the Hildebrandine policy, and yet reserve for the monarch what nothing could induce him to relinquish. This is the way in which England became the quarry for the Papal and Norman birds of prey,—twin birds which flew in company.

The system which the Papal party, with great sagacity, determined to destroy was, as already noticed, marked by the joint action of clergy and laity in ecclesiastical matters, and by the prevalence of the married state amongst the parochial clergy and the canons. At the root of the first-mentioned old and venerable English Church polity lay the time-honoured legal system of the country, whereby the ecclesiastical and civil Courts were joined together in one body, presided over by the earl and the bishop, sitting together. This had been as much the "Establishment" as the formation of parishes under the "person" or "parson," who, it should be remembered, had from the beginning been, by consent and desire of all, mixed up with every secular proceeding of common parochial life. In pursuance of these principles even the celibate monks, as soon as the pressure of power was relaxed, had resumed their old position as married canons, wherever that could be effected. The Witan, or the king and Witan, or the king alone, appointed bishops; and the clergy, even prelates, were as much subject to the law as the common layman. Thus the laity had obtained a

place in church affairs quite inconsistent with the principle of a theocracy, where the clergy are independent rulers of the laity, or at least a separate caste. To Norman eyes it was an act of pure charity to force upon the backward islanders the new clerical fashions, the received doctrine of Transubstantiation, the new relations with the Papal Continent,—just as it was a duty and a charity to build the new stone churches which, to the great advantage of England, superseded almost everywhere the meaner erections of English times. They would be sure to like it all after a time; and to a considerable extent these clever people were right. Lanfranc became as great a "conquestor," acquirer, or "conqueror" of the Church of England, as William became "conqueror" (for that was all the word originally meant) of the State. While the one depressed the English lords to the rank of vassals, the other placed the whole people under Norman bishops, abbots, and parsons.

But the mere change of rulers was nothing to the great constitutional change which withdrew the bishop and clergy from the secular courts, and formed separate ecclesiastical courts, or Courts Christian, for all ecclesiastical offences. This innovation upon English custom was destined to have immense results. The growth of ecclesiastical law, and the great increase of business of all kinds which gathered round the clerical body, soon placed, and could not but place, the great army of tonsured ecclesiastics beyond the reach of the laws of the land. In its inception the Royal Supremacy was intended to be applied so as to control and balance in some degree their dangerous independence, and with a strong king, not hateful to the clergy, the mischief might have been, and was occasionally, controlled; but it placed a bad or weak king, or even a strong but unfortunate king, in a wholly false position. He might be within his rights in the exercise of his supremacy, and the ecclesiastics wrong in the exercise of their acquired powers; but the country, if it did not respect the king, though right, very often supported the ecclesiastic, though wrong.

What was this Royal Supremacy? Its three component parts, as laid down by William and Lanfranc, were: (1) That no pope but the one acknowledged by the king was to be acknowledged by the ecclesiastics. (2) The ecclesiastics

might regulate their own affairs, if the king gave permission to meet in synod, but not without; and even then their canons could only be valid by his consent. (3) The king's tenants must not be excommunicated without his leave. These rules were, if properly understood, not only reasonable, but necessary to secure civil government. They are substantially identical with the Constitutions of Clarendon, the policy of Edward I., the great statutes of Edward III. and Richard II., and with the principles which Henry VIII. applied in order to carry through the Reformation. But the Royal Supremacy found its match in the Papacy. It took no less than four centuries and a half to undo the work of Lanfranc, Hildebrand's representative, in England. The clergy had, in fact, been placed in a false position by the Courts Christian, and the rending of the Church of the West at the Reformation was the consequence. Dante referred the miseries of the Church to the so-called "Donation of Constantine"; Englishmen can point to something less shadowy and less disputable.

It should also be observed that with the great Archbishop Lanfranc commences, as might be expected from the superior cultivation of the Normans, a new species of primate. Not more than about three out of ten of his predecessors carry any distinguishing mark; after him, some seven out of ten achieve a decided distinction. Thus we are forced to study the career and character of each, not only as archbishop, but before he attained that rank,—a task which has been facilitated for us by the late Dean Hook, and will be occasionally noticed in the following chapters. His 'Archbishops of Canterbury' has faults, but it has been a real gift to his country, and ought now to be edited in some less costly form. It may be asserted that the archbishops rank quite as high as the Popes, man for man. If we look down the list of the latter, we shall observe how very few of them can be placed in the first class. Milman's 'Latin Christianity' may serve as our guide.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE NORMAN CONQUEST (*continued*).

We have so far taken the ecclesiastical changes made at the Conquest before the secular; and we must not even yet lose sight of the subject, but note the working of the new system during the century succeeding the Conquest. The real nature of the change will then be manifest. It may be briefly stated thus: The separation of clergy and laity in the courts of the Shire and Hundred began to show its effects from the moment of the formation of the new courts, and in less than three generations placed the clergy practically above the law. In that rough age life for life was, still more even than now, the principle which alone could protect society; for the crude Old English system of a graduated fine for taking life was becoming obsolete. But the Court Christian could not take life; and simple degradation from the ecclesiastical order only set the tonsured villain free to commit another murder. A layman was hung for one capital offence; the cleric might commit two before he paid the penalty: and this was at a time when all the occupations which we call "professions" were in the hands of the clergy, and when the tonsure was extensively sought for the sake of its privilege of immunity. The quarrel with Becket turned in reality upon this question. The true and essentially right sentiment concerning the sacred character of the priesthood had by that time been stretched by the Courts Christian into one of the most flagrant and intolerable wrongs to which society could be subject.

Nor was the Norman reproduction of the policy of Dunstan and Odo, under Hildebrandine influences, any less a failure than the new courts. This, like the other, was also a well-meant effort to raise the spiritual character of the clergy; but the enforced prevention of the marriage of priests did undeniably, as in earlier times, ignore the fundamental principles of human nature and social life, and thus, if we may judge by a thousand indications, induced many more evils than it prevented. The multitude of new founda-

tions of monks, and later on of friars, occurring almost annually, and generally intended to be a reform of the method of already corrupted predecessors, forms the best commentary on the whole system of so-called "religious houses," when it had once passed out of its primitive missionary stage. This is not to say that it did not produce in every age some noble examples of Christian men; it was the fault of the system that this was by no means the general result.

But we must never forget that Lanfranc laid the Church and realm of England under certain great obligations. It was owing to his skilful and courageous championship of the rights of his see that Canterbury emerged unscathed out of the hands of the rapacious Odo of Bayeux. It was Lanfranc who advised William to refuse the homage demanded of him by Pope Gregory VII.—advice which the Pope threatened to suspend him for giving; it was he who persuaded William to move the "bishops' stools" from villages to towns—Sherborne and Ramsbury to Old Sarum, Wells to Bath, Selsey to Chichester, Lichfield to Chester, Dorchester (Oxon) to Lincoln, and Elmham to Thetford; and it was he who advised his king, though he scarcely needed it, to "gather all the crosiers into his own hands." Indeed the great baronial position already assigned to the episcopate, and magnified at the Conquest, made this irregular exercise of the Royal Supremacy almost a necessity. Men looked, and looked all through the Middle Ages, to the royal appointment as the only refuge from Papal appointment. And, as a matter of fact, the Popes, raised to so great an eminence by the Hildebrandine policy, were on the whole successfully kept at bay by the Norman sovereigns: it was only when John had by his own faults ruined the royal position that the Popes established their own appointment of an Archbishop of Canterbury, and took care, by means of the system of Provision during the life of the office-holder, to continue the process in later times. Half the abuses of the medieval Church grew out of these opposing claims to ecclesiastical appointments. The difficulty had been partly met before the Conquest by the interposition of the Witan, at which the bishops were present; but after the Conquest only by the *Congé d'élire*, which practically came to very little.

Nor must we omit to notice one more attempt to balance the enormous power now given to the clerical body. It was William's sagacity which established the principle that no ecclesiastic should leave the country without permission. But for this restriction the government of the clergy would in that day have been exercised directly from Rome. It played a prominent part in the Becket struggle.

The old eleemosynary tenure of ecclesiastical lands being turned at the Conquest into one of simple vassalage, these various arrangements did indeed secure the existence of a National Church—but at the expense of an unceasing conflict, and the destruction of all direct influence upon the ecclesiastical body on the part of the laity, individually and collectively. Just as in the rest of the feudal system, developed on the English basis by William, so in this. The king became practically, as well as theoretically, the sole depositary of the power of appointment and the rights of lordship over the bishops and clergy. When this royal position became, under a bad king, flagrantly offensive, the popular sentiment, as already said, went along with ecclesiastical resistance; but the king naturally refused to relinquish hereditary rights, and the country had no idea of deposing even a Rufus. Thus affairs occasionally came to a dead-lock. At the same time the corruption of the Papacy, over and above its position as a foreign Power, made it a wholly unfit Court of Appeal, and experience soon showed that such an appeal was worse than none. Edward I. was forced at last to outlaw the clergy till they consented to become his subjects, and Henry VIII. completed the process. So much for the far-reaching results of William's ecclesiastical changes.

On the other hand, the continental position established by the Norman and Plantagenet[1] Kings of England demanded in that age a certain unity of ecclesiastical government throughout their dominions; and there would have been losses to set against the gains of isolation. We may regret that, having

[1] Henry II. and his immediate successors were not in the habit of using the designation of "Plantagenet" as a family name; but the custom of centuries has made it too familiar and convenient to be relinquished,—certainly not for the word "Angevin," which is unsatisfactory in more respects than one.

a good thing, the country did not keep it; but who shall say that it was not best on the whole that England should pass through the crucible, and learn by centuries of conflict to set its true value on what her people had little understood till it was gone?

The Conqueror's mode of dealing with the ecclesiastical body here noticed, affords an excellent illustration of his manner of effecting the silent revolution which marks his reign in all other respects. His crafty, perhaps for the times sagacious, policy may be summed up thus. It was to retain all existing institutions, but while retaining, to abstract from them, indirectly if possible, their popular character. In every case, secular and ecclesiastical, the principle of deriving all authority from the Crown was to be infused, yet without more offence than was absolutely necessary in order to carry out his object. The process was gradual. A large step was taken when he replaced the owners of forfeited estates by his own followers; revolts enabled him to extend the system; and before his death the country had become so used to it that the process could be completed in peace. We may put it out more in detail as follows:—

The Conquest proper extended from 1066 to 1071, during which time the centres of resistance were destroyed, and the national spirit crushed out. This first period includes the serious Devonshire insurrection of 1068, the abortive invasion of Harold's sons in Somersetshire, the English massacre of Normans, first at Durham, and then at York under Waltheof, the terrible vengeance taken upon Yorkshire, and the last stand made by Morcar and Hereward in the Isle of Ely. It ends with William's second Coronation by the Papal Legate, a sign that he wished to supersede the merely English Coronation by the Archbishop of York, and to unite his new realm ecclesiastically with Normandy and the Continent. 1066–1071.

The second is the period of Conciliation, from 1071 to 1076, and the settlement of Church and State upon the feudal basis familiar to the Continent. This was broken for a brief moment by the Norman insurrection during William's absence, under Ralph de Guader, or The Wader, which involved Waltheof; and it ends with his execution, which extinguishes the last spark of English independence. 1071–1076.

The third period takes up the rest of the reign, and is marked 1076–1087.

1076–1087. by William's grand political discovery that the familiar feudalism both of England and the Continent was not suited, without some change, to a conquered country which inherited so many centuries of free traditions. In the year before he died he exacted at Salisbury an oath of fealty to himself from every landholder.

Thus William invented a new Feudal System. Each landholder who was not a "tenant in capite" must, on pain of forfeiture, do homage to two persons, his lord and his king. The vassal of the lord broke his oath if he followed that lord against the king, and thus the very root of disorder which infected the system abroad was cut away in England. The king was no mere lord of lords like his brother kings, but lord *of* every freeholder. The skilled organisation, the elaborate preparation, required to produce this result is shown in Domesday Book. From that inestimable document, now at last in our own day beginning to be properly interpreted, we learn what had been doing during these later years. We find what had become of the old English folk-land, the boroughs, the landholders, the ecclesiastics, the lower classes of the people, the forests and the wastes,—an almost necessary study for those who wish to look below the surface of things.

We may then sum up the Conqueror's reign as one of conquest and new establishment, while the reigns of his three successors represent the abuses which crept in after his death, restrained for a time by Henry I. The reign of Henry II. represents the complete organisation of the people, who were beginning to become mixed, and the correction of some at least of the errors which sprang out of the Conqueror's system.

Lastly, it falls in with our plan to remark that there are certain broad and beneficial results of the Conquest, extending down through eight centuries to our own time, which, in the scientific completeness of detail now common, are liable to pass out of sight.

We owe the peculiar place taken by the Crown in England to the Conquest—to the wealth, the landed possessions, and the "prerogative" (that word so historical, so full of meaning), of the Norman sovereigns; for the old English monarchy promised nothing of the kind. This position has never been overthrown, except for a very brief period, in any of our civil

convulsions. The Crown still remains in some sense a governing power, and carries with it the active headship of our social system. Even Cromwell found himself obliged to submit to the idea of kingship engrained in the English mind. It was this which formed no small ingredient in the success of the Plantagenet kings, when the wars with France, enfeebled as that country was by the weight of an already effete feudalism, tested the comparative progress of the rival nations. That English royalty did not become a mere tyranny was due partly to the great position of the Norman barons, and partly to the stubborn nature of the Old English element, ever asserting itself, and choosing by turns for its ally the king, the nobles, or the ecclesiastics. The Third Estate was so rooted in the land, the law, and the religion of the country, that the history of England is in some sense a history of its gradual elevation from the lowest to the highest place in our political system. And yet so finely was the balance formed that the Third Estate has never, except for one brief moment, been so powerful as to eclipse or overthrow the other constituent parts of the political system.

We may sum up this branch of our subject with the remark that it is owing to the Norman Conquest that our country has solved, as no other has, the problem how to unite the old with the new, the grandeur of Imperialism with the rough workaday style of a Republic. Again, as to social life, it is due to the Conquest not only that loyalty to the Sovereign has been a bond of union between all classes, but that the interdependence of classes has been proof against all changes and all flux of time. When in the course of a few generations the time had come for sweeping away the Norman feudal system, it was found to have left behind it what no country which has not been fortunate enough to have passed under that discipline has ever possessed, a mutual recognition of rights, habits of respect, and a readiness on the part of each class to take an interest in the people belonging to another. The daughter communities of England, which have been educated under Republican influences, still exhibit in their degree these characteristics, inherited from the common stock.

Again, every one knows how the Conquest set the old English law in a feudal framework, the gradual casting off

of which frame has been the work of eight centuries. At least, the whole history of real or landed property law has been the extrication and reproduction of Old English law from underneath the Norman feudal law, which, however necessary at the time for the military defence of the realm in the Middle Ages, had overlaid and pressed it down. And yet there were great advantages in the gradual character of this process. Every extension of common law in the ancient free direction strengthened its hold over the affections of the people, and every step it took hindered the development of Roman or civil law, and forced that law, in spite of the great ecclesiastical body, into a wholly subordinate place. Hence one great cause of the difference between the English and other nations; hence also the unity of English law in the Middle Ages throughout the whole land, so unlike the differences between the two systems of law which prevailed in north and south France.

From the Conquest also was gained not only the unity of English law and of English political life, but the law-abiding character of the people. The strong arm of the Norman kings restrained with permanent effect the lawlessness and pugnacity of the mixed races which they had conquered, admitting neither the private wars nor the differences of coinage presented by the Continental States. Stephen's reign forms the one exception which proves the rule.

From the Conquest also proceeded that infusion of French-Latin into the Old English which made the matchless English tongue the most flexible, sonorous, and effective in the world, —rivalled only, if at all, by the ancient Greek. Solid, sound, and not unpromising as the Old English literature was, we have no reason to suppose that it would have outstripped the progress made by the kindred German nations so greatly as it did, except for this infusion. It was a faithful index of the character of the people: it had already become stagnant, and the insular position of England was sure to stunt still more the literary growth; but the Conquest renewed its youth. As years passed, and the French-speakers became intermingled with the English-speakers, the growing fusion of blood brought with it the fusion of language which gave elegance and expansion to what had hitherto been poor and

rude, though vigorous; and it opened the way for a still further advance by means of the Renaissance. The universal homage paid to Shakespeare is not due alone to his genius, but to the richness of the language which he found and moulded to his purpose. It has been said that if we take to pieces any sonorous lines, as, for example, those of "God Save the Queen" or the Hundredth Psalm, and pick out the words which are of Romance origin, we should discover how hard it would be to replace those words by Old English synonyms. This is only to say that we may in our zeal for the purity of English easily disparage too much the Norman element. No doubt for addressing the poor and uneducated, the more Old English words we can use, and the fewer Latin, the better; but that is all.

CHAPTER XIV.

WILLIAM RUFUS, HENRY I., AND ANSELM.

THE best way of looking at the period immediately succeeding the Norman Conquest is to take these two reigns together. The two younger sons of the Conqueror, both strong, able, brave, and warlike men, acted on much the same principles and with substantially the same results. Both kept a firm hold on Normandy, the inheritance of their elder brother, and practically united it with England; both found themselves, in consequence, opposed to the as yet feeble Kings of France—Philip I. and Louis VI.—and both far eclipsed those kings as European sovereigns; both found that the new and independent position established by their father and Lanfranc for the ecclesiastical body involved them in difficulties which taxed their powers to the utmost; both learnt to balance this position by using ecclesiastics as Ministers of State to carry out their will; both were vicious, the first in a worse way than the second. Both established order in the realm, though in different degrees, putting down rebellions, using the native English forces against the Norman barons, and cruelly pro-

tecting the royal forests. Both enlarged the dominions acquired by their father, and left the realm very much as we may think he would have left it had he lived. In short, they were the true sons of the mighty Bastard, with wild blood in their veins, and with the faults of the age in addition. Yet it may seem paradoxical to say, that better kings would have been less useful to England at that time. They represented the iron will which alone could hammer the incoherent elements of English society into a single mass; they did this work through the institutions of Feudalism and Chivalry, which last was indeed as yet in its infancy, but its impalpable form was gradually emerging out of the fumes of the Crusades.

It will save much time and trouble if we regard these two institutions not so much as systems good or bad in themselves, but as steps towards the free relations of man to man which later ages were to witness. This was better understood formerly than it is now. The want of perceiving that each of these formed only a sort of transition-stage has betrayed certain writers into somewhat absurd errors. It is easy to prove that Feudalism and Chivalry are imperfect agencies by the side of a moral code enforced by law on all alike in a modern society, and that Chivalry is to be despised for its preference of the interests of the great and noble to those of the lower classes; but this method of treating the subject really evades the question. The point is that, in the earlier stages of a society in which one section has been conquered by another, the military character of government must necessarily find a chief place, and these institutions interpose between anarchy and a centralised tyranny. That makes them not only tolerable, but beneficial. The gradation of classes forms itself into a system—each has rights which the others acknowledge; effective government goes on in an independent and localised form. By-and-by the feudal chiefs quarrel with kings, with the people, with each other: the system breaks up; it has done its work; but underneath the shelter of the great trees the undergrowth of the forest has been able to make an upward shoot. In due time the trees fall, as Gibbon has said of the effect of the Crusades, and the forest changes into a garden.

So also Chivalry, with its laws of honour, munificence,

courage, self-devotion, protection of the weaker sex, and union with religious sentiment, forms for its time an excellent substitute for the highest law and morality; and in its purer form it is high enough. The tendency is, however, as time goes on and the best examples die out, to licentiousness and extravagances of various kinds; and when public opinion is sufficiently formed these faults are exposed; it dies down and disappears. But it is not really dead; it breaks out of the soil again and emerges without our being aware of it in what we call the "gentleman." No country which has not gone through these stages exhibits the character of "gentleman" in perfection; no other settles down into a wholesome constitutional condition. The whole subject was sensibly treated long ago by Hallam, and many of its details by Guizot.

For William Rufus's reign we go to Mr Freeman's volumes, where, if we have the antiquarian impulse, we can study the history of nearly every baron, bishop, town, or castle in England and Normandy. We will content ourselves with summing up Rufus's work under its secular and ecclesiastical aspects, an easy division in so short a reign. 1087-1100.

Under secular acts we have the brilliant success of William, during the first year of his reign, in putting down the formidable insurrection of Odo his uncle, Robert his brother, William of Carilef, Bishop of Durham, the Earls of Shrewsbury (Montgomery), Norfolk (Bigod), and Leicester (Grantmesnil). In this work Lanfranc, who had taught him and knighted him, and for whom he had the respect of a pupil for a wise tutor, greatly assisted Rufus. It is right to observe that all accounts agree in stating that this king was a good son, and always thoroughly loyal, not only to his father, but to his father's friend, Lanfranc. The death of that great archbishop in 1089 removed the restraint under which he had hitherto acted, and we soon observe a moral declension; but we must also observe that all the accounts we have of Rufus come from monks, with whose fraternity he was in constant conflict.

Perhaps this strong and clever king was not so black as he is painted. He is admitted to have been not only a good son, and a brave man even to excess, but to have exhibited the virtues of chivalry, generosity to fallen foes, respect for

his word when pledged in treaty or on the submission of an enemy, and munificence. His worst detractors allow that he had bursts of kindly feeling. He was certainly not all bad; and with good management, such as that of Lanfranc, something might have been made out of him. On the other hand his moral character appears to be indefensible; his profanity was notorious; his treatment of Church property unscrupulous.

At any rate, for carrying the war into Normandy he can hardly be blamed, though a really wise and good prince might have been contented to assist his brother to govern, rather than take advantage of his incapacity; yet probably Robert was incorrigible. Still less can he be blamed for suppressing his younger brother Henry, who was abler and wiser, but not at all more scrupulous than himself. It must be remembered that Normandy was as much a part of the paternal inheritance as England, and could not on any account be left to be taken possession of by the King of France. At all costs it must be saved from his hands: England could not be left exposed to the same danger which it had experienced from the Normans in 1066. This obvious consideration has been but little noticed. The visits of William to Normandy were made in 1091, 1094, and 1095; on the last occasion he accepted, and quite rightly, the mortgage of Normandy from Robert, when the latter required money in order to join the First Crusade. We must remember also that the King of France no more thought of going on the Crusade than William himself. How then, after all that had happened between the Kings of France and the Dukes of Normandy, could Normandy be left to his tender mercies? It was not only saved, but the province of Maine, which his father had annexed, and which had revolted from Robert, was recovered.

We should next group together the distinct additions to the strength of England made by Rufus within the island itself. It cannot be denied that he conquered South Wales, not indeed quite as distinctly as Edward conquered North Wales, two centuries later, since it was left to Henry I. to complete his work; that he actually incorporated Cumberland with England, just at the time when the frontier had to be established with Scotland, and founded Carlisle as a

great fortified city, the bridle of the Scots from that day onward. Thus the last trace of an independent South Strathclyde or Cumbria was obliterated.

The details of these proceedings must of course be omitted; but we may at least observe how much was owing to the border-castles which Rufus built,—parts of a sound military system; but, broadly speaking, all these Norman reigns must be remembered for the general building of such castles by the Norman nobles in every part of the land,—rude, massive, uncomfortable residences no doubt, but the symbols and necessary accompaniment of feudalism, a stage towards English civilisation and social order. It was pre-eminently an age of builders; builders of churches and bridges as well as castles—crowned by the magnificent Westminster Hall, the chief monument left by Rufus, destined to be the palace of Justice. Strange that we should owe this to so violent and unjust a man; still more that the first Justiciar, in the person of Rafe Flambard, his chief minister, dates from his reign. Even this Rafe, black as his record is, distinguished himself by laying the foundations of feudal law on an intelligible basis, and by his share in the erection of Durham Cathedral.

Finally, no king dealt more successfully with Scotland as a kingdom than Rufus, if perhaps we except Henry II., who owed his success to the accident of the Scottish king being caught in a fog by the English commander. Here Rufus set up and pulled down kings at his will; and his establishment of Edgar, son of Malcolm Canmore, upon the throne, fixed, (as Mr Freeman says) the future history of Scotland. The English element had henceforth the distinct predominance over the Gaelic Scotland and the North British Strathclyde. The Highlanders became a wholly inferior portion of the kingdom, and always remained so; settlers poured in from England,—Normans as well as English,—Balliols, Bruces, and the rest.

This end was attained through Rufus's policy of trusting Edgar the Atheling with the guardianship of the young princes, his nephews, sending him at the head of the English troops, and using his influence in Scotland, as brother of St Margaret. He even contrived to make use of the slovenly Duke Robert in pacifying Scotland. Surely these are

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strokes of diplomatic ability, to be set against those exactions and refinements of taxation, of which we should not perhaps have heard so much, had not the ecclesiastical controversies of the reign made him the bugbear of the monkish annalists. Nor can we justly condemn him for punishing, with all the power he possessed, the Norman nobles who revolted,—Robert of Mowbray, who actually raised the north against his king, and William of Eu, who was clearly guilty of a conspiracy. Cruel as his mutilation was, William of Eu deserved death; mutilation was thought more merciful than death, and equally incapacitated the culprit. Mowbray was only imprisoned.

The ecclesiastical struggles of the reign grew out of the feudal strictness which the ecclesiastical lawyers of the day, —the clerks of the king's Chancery—were now engrafting on the original system. If, said they, the lay fiefs of the king were, whenever vacancies occurred, to come under the king's wardship until the minor was of age, why not spiritual benefices? The bishops were vassals of the king. The wealth of the ecclesiastics was enormous, the expenses of all these successful wars, dangerous rebellions, public buildings, also enormous; while it is fair to say that the bishops and abbots were too often of very little use, either to their sees or their Order. The temptation to keep their offices open on a vacancy was great,—just for a few months, just for a year, just for another year, and so on. Flambard has the credit of being the tempter, and though this does not remove the guilt from the unprincipled king, still we must try to measure the temptation.

It may at least be said that these purloined ecclesiastical revenues mainly went towards public purposes; we do not hear of William, though a debauched, as a wasteful king. The ordinary taxation was certainly not sufficient for such a strain as Rufus was putting upon the national resources with regard to France, Wales, and Scotland. Edward I., placed in similar difficulties, had to use strong measures before he could obtain their proper share of the taxes from the clergy; Henry VIII., interpreting the national will, laid a rough hand upon the monasteries; Elizabeth rifled Church lands; it was not till the time of James I. that Church property was placed beyond the reach of royal rapacity. The Norman kings, for

their part, unscrupulously kept open the sees, taking their revenues for two or three years together, and left the diocese to be worked by the inferior clergy. It was no doubt much to be condemned. It was not quite so bad as to abbeys, which were not charged with episcopal functions for the good of the people, and of which the king was more or less patron. They were for the most part exempt.

The good Anselm and the bad Rufus came in contact with one another in a manner which has greatly obscured the true issue on these ecclesiastical points. It is remarkable that the regular chroniclers of the time say but little about the struggle which we are now to criticise; but the works of modern writers have been almost entirely founded on the 'Life of Anselm,' written by his bosom friend, the monk Eadmer. Now this good monk is a careful and circumstantial writer, for whose graphic biography we cannot be too thankful; but historical criticism requires that we should make a large discount from the glosses of partial narrators. There are ways of putting the simplest facts which carry a colouring of the facts, and Eadmer, steeped in Roman policy during his times of residence at Rome and at Bari as well as at home, conveys that colouring in every line of his work. Thus we are in this day the victims of a reaction from a former stage, just as in the cases of Dunstan and Becket, and our sympathies are drawn out for Anselm the monk, a pious, able, and conscientious man, who had been depreciated by older writers, such as Hume; and the king, whose conduct it is indeed beyond the power of any man to praise, is blackened to an extent which leads some people, out of mere opposition, to vote in his favour.

At any rate we are forced to ask ourselves to be fair, and to use the best judgment at our disposal in answering the following question. What does the famous rule mean: "Render unto Cæsar the things which be Cæsar's, and unto God the things which be God's"? Everything depends on a proper assignment of "things" to each power. The Saviour of mankind decided it in the case before Himself in favour of Cæsar; and He Himself teaches us that each man is responsible for a decision in every other case as it comes before him. In the works of a large section of modern writers the treatment is very simple. Whatever Anselm stood out for against Rufus

was a praiseworthy rendering of "things" to God; whatever Rufus claimed against Anselm was a blameworthy claim for Cæsar against God.

This partial judgment is not likely to be the deliberate verdict of history.

CHAPTER XV.

WILLIAM RUFUS, HENRY I., AND ANSELM (*continued*).

As we commence this chapter with a view of Anselm's life and conduct which is not to be found in many of the ordinary books, it may be well to point out one which, though not wholly followed here, is distinguished by a judicious independence and a truly English spirit. It is said that Dean Hook latterly modified his opinion of Anselm, as expressed in his 'Archbishops of Canterbury,' but nothing of the sort has appeared under his hand since his second edition, and any one is free to adopt his verdict as his own. If it is true that Anselm was the first important representative of the ecclesiastical rebellion against the principle laid down by "both Church and Realm of England, that the Sovereign is in all causes, and over all persons, ecclesiastical as well as civil, in these his dominions supreme," and that, trained in a foreign monastery, he "never understood his own position in England," and "was incapable of making any allowances for the character of the king,"—then the mere statement of the case forms a sufficient reason for examining the Archbishop's career in some detail.

On Anselm's visit to England in 1093 he displayed that "want of tact, of common consideration, and of courtesy which marked his public life when he passed from the cloister to the court."[1] The most familiar instance occurred when, instead of confining himself to the object of his visit, he took the occasion of a private interview to reproach the king for his immoral conduct and the state of ecclesiastical affairs. We have to consider whether, as Abbot of Bec, he was in a

[1] The quotations are derived from the book mentioned in the text.

position to act in this way, and certainly to pause before we venture to compare him, as some have, with John the Baptist. Or, still as Abbot of Bec, what absurdity could be greater than his allowing himself to be persuaded to put forth in England a prayer that the king might be led to institute a primate? Then comes the king's illness and penitence, and Anselm's undoubtedly reluctant acceptance of the Primacy. It should be noticed that Anselm did not accept the appointment on condition that he might acknowledge Urban II. as Pope; for William only told him he would make no promise on that point. It was left open. Nor was any difficulty made by Anselm in the matter of doing homage to William.

Again, a great deal has been said on the question of the sum of £500, which the king declared was below the amount due on his appointment. Anselm replied by a lecture which Dean Hook says was better adapted for the schools of Bec than for the council chamber of a prince: "The primate begs the king to treat him as a friend;" on which the king, provoked by the lecture beyond measure, could contain himself no longer, but exclaimed, "I want neither thee nor thy foul tongue." The treatment had been at the least injudicious. Nor was William likely to be appeased when he was informed that Anselm had distributed the money among the poor, on condition of their praying for the king's conversion. It is a pity that the king had no real friend near him, for he now went on from bad to worse, disgusted and desperate.

Nor did Anselm command his respect the more for pouring out the vials of his wrath upon the long hair, divided in front, of the courtiers, and even refusing absolution to those who refused to shave their beards and clip their hair. It is difficult to understand the admiration which has been bestowed on this conduct. No doubt it is the business of the clergy in all ages to reprove vice, but not to punish people for the outward sign which is supposed to signify it.

We then have Anselm forcing his way into the king's presence, and, just at the moment when William was starting for war in Normandy, demanding a Synod. This was, to say the least, most inopportune; for what protection had the State against ecclesiastical tyranny when the king was out of the country? When Anselm, however, reproached him for keep-

ing abbeys in his hands without appointing abbots, all honour is due to the confessor; but he had naturally and inevitably lost all influence. The king declared the abbeys were his own, and told Anselm that he was offensive, and was breaking his promise. William then hinted that Anselm might offer him money, and the bishops urged him to do so, but the archbishop declined to adopt what was really a universal custom. This ought not to be called a "mean advice" of the bishops. Anselm had been so long accustomed, says Dean Hook, to see his words recorded as the dictates of infallible wisdom, and to receive such "adulation from monks and women," that he could not see that he was wrong. These gifts from archbishops and bishops were channels by which some small part of the vast ecclesiastical wealth came to the nation, and to the king as representing the nation for national purposes.

Such was the state of affairs when Anselm made up his mind that he must obtain the pallium of investiture from Urban II. William replied that he had not himself acknowledged this Pope. Here no one can deny that Anselm was clearly in the wrong. He was breaking a fundamental law of England. If he felt that he could not give up his old allegiance to Urban, sworn as Abbot of Bec, he should have resigned.

Then comes the trial of the case at Rochester in 1095, not by a Council, nor a Witan, but by an assembly of spiritual and temporal peers, vassals of the Crown. "The bishops behaved exceedingly well throughout this affair." They would not allow it to be considered a question of religion but of politics. Anselm took the exactly opposite side. It seems a sort of perversity on his part. No doubt he was conscientious, and thought he was doing right, but on that side of his duty we may perhaps say that his was not an educated conscience.

Next in order came William's crafty scheme of gaining his point by himself acknowledging Pope Urban, and his being completely deceived by the Papal Legate, Walter of Albano, who not only invented a compromise worthy of Italian subtlety, but persuaded both parties to adopt it. The plan was this: The pall blessed by the Pope was sent to the king from Rome, and by him ordered to be placed on the High

Altar at Canterbury; while Anselm was willing to believe that, by taking it thence, he did not take it from the king.

Again, in 1096 the Welsh war required levies from all vassals. It must in fairness be presumed that Anselm's contingent of soldiers were "not able-bodied, neither were they properly equipped. If so, his negligence was culpable," and William's anger justifiable. "Anselm, with his usual self-complacency, did not pause to reflect whether he was to blame, but meekly threw the whole blame on the king." Then William refused him leave to go and consult the Pope, knowing that he only wanted Papal authority to enable him "to evade his promise to adhere to the laws and customs of England." Anselm, insisting upon his request beyond all bearing, William, not unnaturally, threatened to confiscate the estates of his see. Now "his request did not relate to theology, but it simply concerned the duty of a subject to a sovereign. There could be no paramount necessity for his going to Rome. It was really a political question." With "unconscious insolence," "he attributed corrupt motives to others, and assumed the tone of a martyr:"—"I will abide in God;" on which William, provoked beyond measure, was mean enough to deprive him of the society of his friends. Anselm now goes back upon the condition which he says he had made—that he would "observe the customs so far as they accorded with right principles and the law of God." This, of course, meant nothing; but he went off at last; for the king was glad to get rid of him. He was received by Pope and Cardinals with great honour; public appeals were even made to him sitting at the Papal Court. But Urban was bribed. Anselm followed him to Lyons; there he heard of William's death. 1100.

Thus, judging of Anselm's proceedings under William II., before we reach Henry I., it is at least clear that there are two sides to the question. The meek and faultless saint has been pronounced by Dean Hook to be a narrow-minded, indiscreet, and conceited representative of the Roman See, placing a canon of the Pope above all the ecclesiastical customs of England, utterly unable to distinguish between "the things which be Cæsar's and the things which be God's," doing evil in spite of personal goodness, and

riveting the Papal claims on England which the Conqueror and Lanfranc had only laid loosely upon her neck. The profane son of the Conqueror could no longer keep the loose ends of the chain in his own hand, and the short-sighted Abbot of Bec placed the lock and key in the hands of the Pope. Further, the very acts which he considered proper with reference to his appointment as archbishop under Rufus, he repudiated when Henry I. came to the throne; showing that his actions were not grounded on reason or national custom, but simply on the decrees of the Pope. He had received investiture from, and paid homage to, William Rufus; he refused both in the case of Henry, not only when demanded of himself, which was perhaps an extreme demand after his original investiture, but he refused to acknowledge the system in the case of other bishops.

Anselm had to do this time with a statesman, a king who rallied pretty nearly the whole English Church against the archbishop. He had touched a tender point, and could get no further. The Court of Rome at last gave way, and allowed Henry to make a compromise (in 1106), by which the Pope was to grant investiture, and the bishop was to do homage for his possessions. Anselm could not but obey the Pope's direction; and the system—the only one possible under the circumstances—was established. Thus, fourteen years before the terrible Wars of Investitures between the Emperors and the Popes had been brought to an end by this very compromise, the pattern had been given by the King of England and the Anglican Church, a fact worth noting. The prolonged struggles, however, which it cost to eject the Pope from the exalted place he now took even under this compromise, and how he strove to raise still higher his imperial position over England on this basis,—these things fill a large space in subsequent reigns. Even in Henry's reign he made a distinct advance in direct power over the whole English Church. "Anselm's contest," says Hook, "was simply for a change of masters;" he desired to supersede a national king by a spiritual despot, and he succeeded.

Another ecclesiastical event—of importance as a precedent—should be mentioned. Henry, in 1102, permitted the holding of a General Synod; at Anselm's own request, and very much to his credit, it consisted both of laity and clergy.

The chief persons of the realm were summoned to attend, and their work was prescribed as follows: "So that whatever was decreed by the authority of the said Council might be kept safe by the harmonious care and solicitude of each Order." This provided for clergy discipline, denounced the vices of the age, especially the slave-trade, and forced the clergy to put away their wives. It was the first time that the rule of celibacy became the universal law of the English clergy—an era in English history. The remarkable thing about this rigorous decree, which, of course, led to vices of a worse kind than anything it had been desired to reform, is that it was effected by the clergy and laity acting together in a Church Council—a precedent of importance in itself—whether it worked for good or ill. It certainly proved the strength of the influence which the Norman monks had obtained over the Norman laity of the upper class.

The ecclesiastical history of the reign was also distinguished by the foundation of the bishoprics of Ely and Carlisle, and the introduction to England of the Cistercian Order of monks, founded by Henry Harding, the Englishman, at Citeaux, the monastery famous for producing the "last father of the Church," St Bernard, Abbot of Clairvaux. Its best-known houses in England were Waverley, Rievaulx, and Fountains. The rule was stricter than the Benedictine; so also was the rule of the Austin Canons, introduced about this time. These soon became the fashionable modes of monasticism.

No very striking public events mark Henry's reign,—the best proof of its success; but two or three points should be noticed. The chief importance of the Charter given at his Accession is that it shows what the Feudal System, as established before and at the Conquest, was, and how far the Norman lawyers had already, during the reign of Rufus, encroached upon it. These abuses he and his successors each promised to reform; and though but little was done, every reign now opened with a similar Charter, till at last the series culminated in the Magna Charta of 1215. Let us observe, by the way, that though the critical state of Normandy obliged Henry to be absent from England for a far longer time than his father had been, his policy was crowned with complete success without affecting the peace of England,

a circumstance which at least marked the ability of his English Government. In this connection we should observe the dates of his two battles, Tinchebrai (1106), which gave him Normandy, and Noyon (or Bremule, or Brenneville), which saved it from the French in 1119; and here we note the value of the English archers, forty of whom are said, by one chronicler, to have really won the battle. If this is true, the bow and arrow not being an original English weapon, they must have developed the use of it with a good will. The Normans shot with fatal effect at Hastings; while as yet it played but a small part in English armies. During the next two hundred years England was becoming a nation of archers; but it was the gradual substitution of the long bow for the short one which enabled them to win the great victories of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.[1]

We should next observe the steady attempts of Henry I. to unite Anjou, the seat of the hereditary foemen of the Norman House, with Normandy (1) by the marriage of his son to Fulk of Anjou's daughter in 1127; and (2) by marrying his widowed daughter, the Empress Maud, to Geoffrey of Anjou, Fulk's son. The death of the Emperor Henry V., to whom she had been married in 1114, enabled her father to bring her forward, after the death of his son, as his heir to the throne. As actual Empress it would have been impossible: as Geoffrey's wife it was politic, though destined to be unsuccessful. This bears on the rapid growth of the Norman principle of hereditary rule. On an Accession the reference to the people, represented by the Great Council as by the old Witan, was little more than formed; and even a female might now succeed, a thing previously unheard of. Nor was any objection made on that score, though no doubt there was plenty of feeling that, in the rougher stages of feudal life, it was an unfit arrangement. Thus England, besides being the first European nation, after the formation of settled States,—to adopt a Concordat with the Papacy, was the first to swear fealty to a female. The lapse of four centuries was, however, required before the orderly accession and firm establishment of an English Queen was possible.

But the reign is chiefly important for its constitutional progress. The "Lion of Justice" lays broad and firm the

[1] See Mr Oman's 'Art of War in the Middle Ages.'

foundation of law and order which his grandson, Henry II., after Stephen's reign of anarchy, built up; showing that the work was strong enough to withstand the disintegrating effects of that period; and this is perhaps its greatest praise. The conquered English people were gradually admitted into the body politic; foreign relations were firmly established; towns were chartered; religious institutions restored and established. But this last was the weak point after all, and we must note it carefully.

The ecclesiastical body had been raised altogether out of its due place by the working of the Norman policy, and that in two main ways (1) by the Hildebrandine system which William I. and Lanfranc introduced, and of which enough has been said. That system culminated in Anselm, and was represented in chief by the Bishop of Rome. And (2) by the method, adopted by the three successive kings, of governing the country by means of ecclesiastics. This was not so much marked even under Lanfranc, or Rafe the Justiciar, as it was under Henry I., who placed the entire administration of his revenue under three monks, Roger and his nephews Nigel and Alexander, while the Earl of Meulan (or Mellent) and his sons were ministers of war. These three great prelates, Salisbury, Lincoln, and Ely, all of one family, thus amassed enormous wealth, built strong castles, such as Sherborne, Salisbury, Malmesbury, Devizes, Newark, and Sleaford, and kept large bodies of troops in pay. Indeed, when Henry was for years together in Normandy, Roger Bishop of Salisbury was Regent. This policy, successful for the moment, and that of allowing the Pope to plant (in 1121) a legate in England, John of Crema, who presided at a Council of bishops, raised the ecclesiastical body to such a height as to be morally and actually by far the strongest in the realm. So Stephen found to his cost. They had the advantage of organised unity, while the barons were disunited; and the power of administering government, to which they were now regularly bred. The ecclesiastical body had in fact been lifted up into a position almost supreme, but the three despotic Norman kings could use and in some degree control it. That position was simply ruinous to their successors.

CHAPTER XVI.

STEPHEN (1135–1154).

THE reign of Stephen was a period of anarchy, which lasted nineteen years; a reign full of the romantic incidents which were the natural consequence of civil war at a time when the military energies of feudalism were at their height, and full of the cruelty and suffering which could not but attend such a state of things. The period has thus not unnaturally been treated very slightly by historians, who hurry to the period of Stephen's successor, when indeed every event is pregnant with political and ecclesiastical importance; and this although the chroniclers give a peculiarly interesting account of military affairs. For the first time, however, a sufficient history of the reign has been recently given to the world in Miss Norgate's 'England under the Angevin Kings.' There we find an excellent analysis of the hereditary qualities of the Houses of Anjou, Blois, and Normandy, and an interesting estimate of Stephen's thoroughly chivalrous character, as well as of the cause of his failure, the "lack of steadfastness" which reduced his whole career as king to a mere chaos of political inconsistencies. Possibly this verdict may be a little too simple. The wisest of kings, if weighted by the barefaced breach of an oath, the oath which Stephen had taken to accept Henry I.'s daughter for his sovereign,—must have dashed himself to pieces against the rock of ecclesiastical supremacy set up by that king, and represented for a large part of the reign by the one king-maker who can be matched with Warwick of the fifteenth century, Henry of Blois, Bishop of Winchester. He was the leader of the powerful "Church militant" in the first place, Stephen's brother only in the second.

It seems probable that the English barons in electing Stephen were actuated by a desire to have a weak king: it is quite clear that the times were by no means ripe for the reign of a woman. Thus Stephen was a mere stop-gap, and his irregular election made a bad beginning of the reign, even though it was confirmed by the Pope. It was natural

that the first difficulties should arise from the side of Scotland, the chivalrous king of which country was David, the uncle of the Empress; at the same time there was no attempt made to protect Normandy from Geoffrey of Anjou, who pressed the rightful claims of his wife with the steady hostility of the Angevins. Thus the Anglo-Norman realm began to break up both in North and South. Twice over the weakness of Stephen's position betrayed him into making the most important concessions to the Scots, even when victorious; but we cannot afford to pass over the battle of the Standard at Northallerton, since it was one of the most characteristic in English history.

It was a battle of the Yorkshire-men, quite independent of their king. They were summoned by their archbishop, Thurstan, and fought on foot, like the men of the Italian cities, round a car, over which, encircling the consecrated Host, floated the standards of St Peter of York, St John of Beverley, and St Wilfrid of Ripon. The archbishop wisely committed the command to Walter Espec, an aged knight who had become a monk; and by his spirited conduct the battle was won. Inspiring the troops with his own enthusiasm, he persuaded them to join hands and swear to conquer or die. Against the steady but scanty line of knights and their retinue, supported skilfully by archers, the wild Scottish hosts dashed in vain. Religious fervour was mingled with a keen remembrance of many a Border quarrel in past times, and the rout was complete. Nevertheless, the gain of the Scots towards independence was as decided as if they had beaten the English; for the young Prince Henry obtained from Stephen's necessities the Earldoms of the county of Northumberland, of Cumberland, and of Huntingdon, with the lordship of Doncaster.

This was in reality even much more than it seemed. The two great northern fiefs now granted to Scotland formed a barrier between the older Northumbria and the older Cumbria (granted by Edmund, Edgar, and Cnut) on the one side, and the realm of England on the other, rendering those older provinces more entirely Scottish, and depriving them of the English and Norman character, though not of the Anglo-Norman speech, which had been grafted in the reign of William Rufus upon the ancient Northumbrian

stock. It was this which complicated the later questions as to the homage due from Scotland. By the time of Edward I. it had been nearly forgotten that the three territories—Scotland proper, Strathclyde, and Lothian—had formerly stood to England in different relations of vassalage, and the case was argued as if all had stood alike. The Bruce and Balliol families, however, remembering their origin, now defied David, and joined the English.

Next year, 1139, Earl Robert of Gloucester, the illegitimate son of Henry I., declared for the Empress, who joined him at Bristol, and along with King David opened that terrible chapter of the Civil War, which the chronicler described in a well-known passage, and summed up in the expressive line—

"God and all His saints seemed to sleep."

In respect of the use of mercenary soldiers, to which Stephen was reduced, the country was harassed much as it afterwards was in the miserable days of King John; in the amount of bloodshed the wars were not to be compared to the Wars of the Roses; but the anarchy was far greater. Castles arose on all sides as if by magic, and formed so many nests of robbers and tyrants, while for the only time in English history barons were able to adopt a private coinage of their own. Strangely enough a vast number of monasteries were also built in this reign,—another evidence both of the religious spirit which mingled with the intense military activity of the times, and of the immunity which the ecclesiastics were enabled to preserve throughout the general confusion.

It was with the great, swollen ecclesiastical family which Henry had placed in charge of the administration of the realm, that Stephen naturally came first into collision. Informed of their secret adhesion to his enemies, he with his usual recklessness of consequences broke up the confederacy, and seized their castles, their vast treasures, and themselves. However just his treatment of traitors, it was to the last degree impolitic, for it raised the whole ecclesiastical body against Stephen, with his brother, the legate, at their head. To avoid excommunication, the king was forced to do public penance, and this afforded his enemies the opportunity to combine from every side. Their success, after a series of

petty conflicts, was signalised at the romantic battle of Lincoln in 1141, when the Earls of Gloucester and Chester put the king's forces to flight, and when the king performed prodigies of valour perhaps never exceeded in any similar case. Captured at last, and delivered over to the Empress, and by her confined in Bristol Castle, his brother the bishop and the clergy now openly joined the Empress, and for the moment she was exalted to the headship of the realm; but she was never crowned, and by her own errors soon fell headlong from that dizzy height. Just about this period, also, her husband had, with great courage and conduct, succeeded in fulfilling the persistent dream of Angevin ambition, and had at last subdued Normandy. Up to this time Normandy, as the fief of the Conqueror, had held the chief place in the rank of the two countries; after this it fell to the second place, and was thus preparing to sink back again to its final destination as a mere province of France.

Never was a war more exactly represented by the pieces on a chess-board. The king and Earl Robert stand for the kings; the Empress and Matilda, Stephen's excellent consort, for the queens; the bishops, the barons, and the castles fill their proper place; the mercenaries and the baronial retinues are the pawns. The interest of the game is now entirely concentrated in the queens, and the chess-board is for the moment Winchester, the ancient capital of England, still, and for the last time, holding the superiority over London.

When we contemplate the Empress, placed as she was for many subsequent years by her sagacious son in charge of Normandy, and ruling it with consummate prudence in a troubled time, we recognise that she had by that time learnt the lessons of life. When we witness her proceedings in Stephen's reign she combines the headstrong haughtiness of her House with the repulsive etiquette of the Imperial throne to which she had been accustomed as the consort of Henry V. When King David and Bishop Henry, the legate, did homage, she would not allow them to rise from their knees in her presence. She insulted the citizens of London, the clergy, and the nobles. She was evidently less fit than Stephen himself to reign, and the legate felt that it was not for treatment of this sort that he had deserted his brother. Meanwhile Stephen's heroic queen and his faithful captain,

William of Ypres, were raising Kent, and soon found London ready to turn again. Driven from that city and mustering her troops at Gloucester, the Empress swooped down upon Winchester, hoping to surprise the shifty bishop; but he rode out by one gate to his neighbouring castle of Wolvesey, while she entered at another. Then followed her siege of Wolvesey, which was no sooner formed than Queen Matilda rushed to the rescue, and the Empress discovered that, instead of besieging, she was besieged. The bishop made no scruple of setting fire to the city, and the Empress, with Earl Robert, found it necessary to retreat. She escaped with infinite difficulty, as did also King David, but not till he had been thrice captured and thrice released for gold: but the great Earl was taken prisoner and confined at Rochester. The next move in the game was the exchange of the two chiefs, Stephen and Earl Robert, the last of whom made Oxford his headquarters, while Stephen was joyfully received in London. Winchester was so nearly ruined by the recent struggle that its history ceases from this time forward to possess any national interest of importance.

Of course Stephen could not long reign in the east of England while the Empress was dominating the west from Oxford; and thus, in 1142, he commenced that famous siege which we connect with her flight over the snow on the frozen Isis, clad in white, to Wallingford. This was her third and last flight. Perhaps it will not be easy to parallel in English history the military adventures of the Conqueror's granddaughter, unless we except those of Margaret of Anjou. She now, and not too soon, left the active command to Earl Robert, who, in 1143, won a decisive victory at Wilton over Stephen; yet their relative positions were scarcely changed till the death of the Earl in 1148. Then at last Matilda retired to Normandy, but the young Henry, her son, had already appeared on the stage. He had learnt rapidly, under King David and Earl Robert, the lessons which he had begun to learn under his father and mother, and which were about to change the face of England.

Some years older than Henry, Thomas Becket was also preparing for his momentous career, during Stephen's last years, while in the household of Archbishop Theobald. He was much engaged in assisting the Primate against Henry,

Bishop of Winchester, for whom life seemed to present no alternative to a state of strife and unrest. Like Anselm before him and Becket afterwards, Theobald was in league with the Pope against the king, was twice exiled, and asserted as usual the political independence of the ecclesiastical body. In supporting the young Henry against Stephen's son Eustace, he little guessed that he was educating the man who was to give the first great blow to that mischievous system which the Bishops of these reigns, Archbishop Thomas, and many others, each proved in turn to be wholly out of place in the government of States.

It was during these later years of the reign that the English gave an interesting proof of their nautical capacity, and the prevalence of the crusading element even in the middle and lower classes, by the singular Lisbon Crusade of 1147. By this remarkable expedition Alfonso, the first King of Portugal, was placed in possession of his capital, and from that day onwards the alliance of the two countries has been a distinct feature in their history. But we know very little about these years. Our excellent authorities, Malmesbury, John of Worcester, and the *Gesta Stephani* come to an end in 1142, leaving us to Henry of Huntingdon alone. Of the year 1148 there is no record whatever. The death of Eustace in 1151, and soon afterwards that of Matilda his mother, synchronised with the sudden uprising of the young Henry, whose threatening attitude on several occasions had prevented Stephen from reaping any solid advantage by the collapse of his old foes. But the Treaty of Wallingford had at last been made possible by these losses. The king was prematurely worn out; and the succession of Henry, which it was agreed should take place at Stephen's death, was a reasonable adjustment of difficulties hitherto insuperable. Yet when Henry became, through his father's death in 1151, not only Duke of Normandy but Count of Anjou, and in 1153, by right of Eleanor his wife, Duke of Guienne and Gascony, and Count of Poitou, he was already overshadowing all his predecessors, and, at Stephen's death in 1154, seemed to be but a little greater through the acquisition of the English Crown. His first years were necessarily spent in securing for England the order which already reigned in his continental dominions, and which had been for so many years suspended under

Stephen. The period of anarchy had been however by no means fruitless, for the warning was taken to heart by the nation.

We ought not to part with the unhappy Stephen without the remark that we owe the institution of titular, as distinguished from territorial, earls to his exigencies. For him they were a means of balancing the great Norman baronial families, and his successor found it far too valuable a system to be discarded. It was a step forward in the social and political life of England.

CHAPTER XVII.

HENRY II. (1154–1189).

THIS great king's reign is naturally divided into three distinct parts. (1) We have the too brief but brilliant period of
1154–1163. nine years, when Henry was devoting his whole energies, along with Becket, his consummate Chancellor, to the reorganisation of a realm long waiting for a master-hand. The
1163–1170. second period is marked by the one all-absorbing, continuous quarrel between the king and Becket. The third embraces
1170–1189. the subjugation of Ireland, Wales, and Scotland, the completion of the great English reforms, and the quarrels between the king and his sons. These were abetted by the King of France and by Henry's turbulent barons, who took advantage of the paralysis which the murder of Becket had produced.

The memory of no one of our kings has been attacked and defended more vehemently by historians; for great principles clashed against one another in his career, and few have been able to do impartial justice. One reason why so many attempts to grapple with this reign have failed is that the importance of Henry's continental possessions is scarcely ever sufficiently measured. We speak of him as the "Angevin" king, but we forget that the rich province of Aquitaine, which Eleanor brought him along with Poitou, also owned his sway, as well as Anjou, Normandy, and their dependen-

cies.[1] And the peculiar nature of that southern dowry must be remembered, the civilisation of the land, its commerce, its cities, its population, its relations with Spain. Henry is more than king of half France: he is a sort of emperor, and has the views of an emperor: his career turns upon that position; England was only one portion of his dominions. His actions must not then be judged as if England alone were of any consequence to him. To hold these vast possessions together there was but one bond, the feudal system, the system which hampered his own relations with his suzerain, the King of France, and the exact conformity to which he knew to be vital in his relations with his own vassals. His conduct towards Louis VII., towards Becket, towards his sons, was guided in every particular on this principle. He had a perfect right, through his wife, to the overlordship of Toulouse; but rather than set the example of taking captive his suzerain, he preferred to give up the prize when it had fallen into his hands. Yet, in reality, none of our kings did more to sap the feudal system in England than he did by the system of scutage which he adopted as a substitute for military service in the field.

The splendid work performed in the first of our periods, when the terms of the treaty with Stephen were carried out, the dangerous castles built in the late reign destroyed, the alienated Crown lands restored, and the foreign troops dismissed, cannot be brought within the scope of outlines such as these. By the end of that time Henry's character was understood, and it may be well to describe it before we bring Becket on the stage. In the first place, it was an exceedingly strong character, formed during a youth in which he had gained a vast experience, both in civil war and under the training, as we have seen, of great men, as well as of his mother, the Empress. It was strong for good and evil; but if his moral character had only been on a par with the rest of his gifts, the good of his public life would have far overshadowed the evil. Even as it was, his qualifications for the work he had to do were most remarkable, and a great measure of success was accorded to him. In other words, he was a

[1] For this and subsequent notices of the English rule in Gascony, see the early chapters of 'The Family of Brocas of Beaurepaire and Roche Court' (Quaritch).

thoroughly public-spirited and clever man, brave, active, and energetic, yet at the same time cautious and industrious; sagacious in his choice of ministers and friends, in which he never made but one mistake, when he turned his useful Chancellor into a most mischievous Archbishop of Canterbury. His personality was irresistible. His simple mode of living, his eloquence, affability, politeness, humour, persuasiveness, his liberality tempered by a good judgment,—all this formed one side of a most rare character.

On the other hand, his life was licentious, and his want of self-control stamped him with a certain selfishness, which matched ill with his undoubted public spirit, a certain artfulness and subtlety, which sapped the respect he might otherwise have inspired. He can scarcely be accused of ambition, for he was only struggling for his rights. It has been truly said that in a political sense his central motive was an intense love of order, and it may be held that his evident love of power was really subservient to that principle. Observing these varied ingredients of character, and noting that Henry's physical powers were in perfect proportion to his mental gifts, we are the less surprised at his remarkable success as an organiser, his readiness of expedient, his original ideas, his capacity for taking pains, his pertinacious resolution. Nor could we expect that such a man, disappointed and driven to desperation, should not at times act hastily and even cruelly, though we shall see that there are two sides to most of the accusations which have been made against him. There is no doubt, also, that his mind was sometimes disordered by the extreme tension of his laborious life, though he speedily recovered from a sort of hysterical fury of which he could not always evade the consequences.

It is evident, therefore, that this is pre-eminently a period of constitutional history, to which, according to the plan of this volume, we can make but a passing reference; but the struggle with Becket coloured four hundred years of political history, and is the central event of the sort between the Conquest and the Reformation. It forms a complete drama: we know everything about it which we can ever know; none have ever lived more in the light than these two great champions of state rights and ecclesiastical pretensions. Up to 1163 nothing whatever had occurred to warn

Henry of the future. The extraordinary man who combined the knight, the lawyer, the clerk, and the man of business in one, had been his confidant in every action of the early period. He believed that in making him archbishop he was securing a friend, such as Lanfranc was to the Conqueror, who would help him to reform the Church. It is impossible to avoid some sympathy for the bitter disappointment which the king foresaw only too well would blast his life, nor can we describe Becket's conduct in turning right round from courtier to monk, and instantly defying his king and friend, as anything but heartless. How could it but change into hatred the former affection of a sovereign who had unfortunately allowed familiarity to breed contempt?

Let us now pass briefly in review the progressive steps of the quarrel. On the first subject of difference Becket was clearly in the wrong. He insisted on the king relinquishing his new plan of having a certain tax, probably the Danegelt, paid straight into the exchequer, instead of allowing it to be paid as usual to the sheriffs. It is of no consequence whether Becket's views were right or wrong; but there is no doubt that he was absolutely impertinent in thus dictating to the king. The next was the old remonstrance against the keeping open of bishoprics. Now this was comparatively little done by Henry, and though Becket had a right to remonstrate, it was a question of time, tact, and fitness. But soon came the inevitable contest, for which the Conqueror and Lanfranc were responsible, consequent upon the state to which the Courts Christian had brought the country. It is not doubtful that disorderly clerks of the worst description were let loose on society. It is allowed by Becket's admiring biographer. Clerical censures had ceased to be effective; the multitude of the tonsured made some reform necessary. It was for this immunity of clerks from the secular courts that Becket was prepared to die rather than see it broken up. It was not, of course, that he wished to defend bad clerks as such, but he appealed to the inherent right of the clergy to be tried by their own Order. Henry was equally resolved to put an end to an intolerable wrong, and insisted that the secular courts should take cognisance, in the first instance, of criminal clerks.

Three Councils were held upon this subject. At West-

minster the king, relying upon the restrictions on clerical immunity which Henry I. had introduced, simply asked the bishops if they would obey those Customs. "Yes," said they, "saving our Order"; but when they saw the "Customs" they all refused to consent. A portion of the bishops soon perceiving that the king was in the right, promised obedience, and broke away from Becket. They even succeeded in persuading him to go to Woodstock, and make a general submission upon oath without the above reservation. When, however, Henry insisted on its being done publicly, Becket refused. At the Council of Clarendon, he repented of his oath to obey the "Customs"; again he is persuaded to consent: but when they are written out for his signature, again refuses. However, he accepts a copy from Henry, but cannot forbear using insolent expressions. The king is exasperated at this quibbling vacillation, while Becket applies to the Pope for a dispensation from the oath he had taken.

At the Council of Northampton matters come to a point. The desperate courage of the archbishop, standing out for what he had persuaded himself was his duty, was conspicuous in every phase of the well-known story, which we cannot here recount. Henry was perfectly within his rights in refusing to let him leave the country, and in arraigning him for excommunicating one of the king's tenants-in-chief. On the next point it might have been technically right, but appears to be morally wrong, that Henry should now, like Henry VIII. in the case of Wolsey, demand a strict account of the public revenues which had passed through his hands as Chancellor unchallenged. The king in fact snatched up the first weapon he could find in what he now saw was war *à outrance*. Becket similarly used his last weapon in defence, the threat of excommunication. Perhaps the most suggestive incident is the adhesion to Becket of the old Bishop of Winchester, Henry, brother of King Stephen, the soldier and king-maker, to whom Henry II. had once been a deadly enemy. Who has not experienced the dramatic force of the thrilling scene at Northampton, and felt that the king's court on that occasion was the last place where the gravest issues of political and ecclesiastical life should have been fought out? In our sympathy with the lonely

prelate we must however remember that he was well aware that he had the whole of the Continent at his back, the King of France, the Pope, the ecclesiastical world on both sides of the Channel. Personally and for the moment it was Becket who was the victim: really it was the king, who was struggling for the sacred cause of order and the fundamental liberties of mankind.

The cause was now adjourned to France, where the tables were turned. The career of St Bernard, the growth of the temporal power of the Papacy, the commencement of the Guelf and Ghibeline struggle, the prevalent crusading spirit, the relations between Louis VII. and Pope Alexander III., were all powerfully working on Becket's side. It was, in short, the general tendency of the age. The danger to Henry's continental dominions was extreme, especially since the Pope created Becket legate of England, and since he, as such, excommunicated Henry's ministers, threatened an Interdict, and anathematised the laws of his country. In the bitterness of his resentment, Henry now outlawed Becket's relatives, a cruel act of retaliation, which proclaimed internecine war. The priest had unlawfully raised the king's household against the king, and placed himself beyond his reach. He should feel the consequences in having to support his own family abroad.

But Becket's position in France was so dangerous to Henry, and Becket was himself reduced to such straits, that we have now no less than four attempts to procure a reconciliation. At Gisors in 1167 it took the form of a simple negative proposal that the Constitutions of Clarendon should not be mentioned. When that failed, Becket agreed at Montmirail to swear to the Constitutions, but with a "*salvo honore Dei.*" On the third occasion, at St Denis, Henry nearly succeeded in persuading the archbishop to return to England, without any stipulations; but this broke off on the king's refusal to perform the feudal ceremony of the Kiss of Peace. No doubt he was unwilling to hamper himself in view of the further struggle which he knew must arise out of Becket's return. At last the reconciliation was made at Fréteval, but still without the Kiss of Peace. If Henry is to be blamed for that, how much more Becket for having previously, and secretly, obtained letters of excom-

munication from the Pope against the bishops who, by Henry's order, had crowned his eldest son at Westminster? This was a political offence, wholly distinct from the previous grounds of dispute. Hearing that the letters would be taken from him he sent them, just before he landed in England, to the prelates concerned. This has been called, even by sympathisers like Dr Lingard, "precipitate and unfortunate"; by Bishop Stubbs, who takes a large view of the whole, an act of "unchristian violence." It was in reality High Treason.

In the light of this conduct Henry's fatal words must be viewed. If he had been able to control himself, and if he had been strong enough to try his rebellious subject for having by his intrigues stirred up war against him for six years, and then committed an overt act of treason, posterity would have ratified Becket's punishment as a traitor, and the troubles it would certainly have caused would perhaps have been less than those which issued out of the murder at the hands of the four knights. The same country could never, it is certain, have held such a king and such a primate; and in some way or other the quarrel must have come to a violent end. That everything else was forgotten when the murder had once taken place was to be expected. Perhaps no one foresaw that the shrine of the so-called "martyr" was to be for centuries the main object of pilgrimages for the north of Europe, and the standard around which the ecclesiastics and their supporters were to rally against the Royal Supremacy, till Henry VIII. quaintly summoned the martyr to defend himself before the treasures of his shrine were broken up. That was the effect of the murder; and it lasted not only throughout the Middle Ages, but, on the point of the immunities of the clergy, even down to our times. That "monster," as Blackstone calls those immunities, came to be known as the "benefit of clergy," and though High Treason was held to cancel it, and the practice as to criminal cases was not uniform, the bishops still retained power to transfer such cases to the ecclesiastical courts, and often made use of their power,—a source of manifold abuses.

The third period of the reign rings from beginning to end with the notes of discord struck from the clash of the Becket

struggle. Yet, on the whole, success attended the skilful policy of the harassed monarch, both in war and peace. Ireland was for the first time conquered, though unhappily too superficially; the enemies who took advantage of Henry's troubles to combine for their special ends,—barons, kings, his own sons,—were in turn discomfited, Scotland and Wales once more subdued. Terrible as it was to find even the young John, his favourite son, amongst his enemies, his empire was not broken up. The punishment for marrying the divorced Eleanor, and for his licentious conduct after marriage, was certain to work itself out, and the punishment to find him where he felt it most, in his relations to his children. The real triumph of the reign, over and above the orderly settlement of the realm in the first period, and the reduction of clerical anarchy in the second, is to be found in the great reforms of the third, which no troubles or sorrows prevailed to suspend. Perhaps the chief of these, though not first in order of time, was the nationalisation of the English military forces, which in general we only partially appreciate under the dry title of the "assize of arms." This was far from being a mere legal provision. It was in reality a return to the old English fyrd, or militia, and it gave back to the people what the Conquest had robbed from them, the sense of a nationality which was to depend on their own prowess, their own training, self-discipline, responsibility, and political courage. This vital principle having been once more aroused, the national life, stunted though it was at times, never fell back again.

We have to add to this boon Henry's vast improvements in the processes of law,—the trial by assize, which was the origin of the trial by jury, the itinerant judges, the regulation of the position of the sheriffs and coroners,—all of which exist now pretty much as he, wisely working on the lines of his grandfather, laid them down. Common Law, as we know it, became under him a system: primogeniture was established as the law of succession: and the hereditary succession to the Crown assumed a more definite character, much needed after the disputed election of Stephen. If we consider further the wonderful invention of scutage, which commuted personal feudal service for money contributions, and thus enabled war to be carried on without dislocating a whole society, and the

reorganisation of the Royal Navy of the Cinque Ports which Henry effected, we find ourselves in the presence of a great constructive reign in which a gifted sovereign was assisted by great men.

Amongst these Becket of course takes his place during his Chancellorship, after which he was a mere obstructive. The great ministers to whom we owe everything, next to the king himself, are Lucy and Glanville: it may be questioned if the country has ever been better served. How many abuses quietly passed away almost unnoticed,—the Danegelt, the old rough system of compurgation, the private coinage which had flourished under the anarchy of Stephen's reign;—and how wisely was the new system of taxation varied, so as to fall equally, or at least in rotation, on all classes alike. Nor ought it to be forgotten that, owing to the great intellectual advance of this reign, to the new continental relations which it induced, and the general growth of order in the realm, Oxford, both city and university, but especially the last, made a remarkable bound upwards. Its origin is lost in obscurity, but research is gradually reasserting an antiquity once supposed to be only legendary. At any rate we now know that the schools of Oxford were flourishing in the reign of Henry I.; and were thronged with students, under the form of an academically organised Society, in the reign of Henry II.[1]

The best commentary upon the good work done by Henry in administering his realm is the way in which the English people gathered round him in his troubles. When the storm of the "martyrdom" was sweeping over his empire, when the earth seemed to be sinking under the Plantagenet sovereignty, the people of England rallied round their heroic king against the Pope and the priesthood, the Kings of France and Scotland, the turbulent barons, the remnants of all the ancient sovereignties which had been merged in that of the Angevins, and his own turbulent and ungrateful sons. With their aid the energetic, ubiquitous, daring, prudent, invincible monarch conquered each and all in detail; and never but once in England, and that only for a brief moment and under ne-

[1] See Professor Holland's article on "The University of Oxford in the Twelfth Century," vol. ii. of 'Collectanea,' published by the Oxford Historical Society.

cessity, did he condescend to the use of that recurring pest and bane of the land, mercenary troops.

We are now beginning to find good books on our different reigns, though not many of them have been treated during the last hundred years with the care and research bestowed by Lord Lyttelton on Henry. Canon Robertson's 'Becket' is the best modern book on that difficult subject, and for a popular account of all this period, Bishop Stubbs's 'Early Plantagenets.' We have mentioned Miss Norgate's 'England under the Angevin Kings.'

CHAPTER XVIII.

RICHARD I. (1189–1199) AND JOHN (1199–1216).

THE Third Crusade, undertaken for the deliverance of Palestine from the disasters brought upon the Crusaders' kingdom by Saladin, was the first to be popular in England; nor is that the only reason for considering the subject in this place, for Richard joined the Crusade in the very first year of his reign, and every portion of his subsequent career was concerned with its consequences. Neither in the time of William Rufus nor of Stephen had the First or Second Crusades found England sufficiently settled for such expeditions; nor was the feudal system, as established by the Conqueror, favourable to the independent action of the barons. Yet in both reigns the nation was the better for some of its more unquiet spirits having been carried off, such as Robert and his Norman knights in the First, and a certain number of those who had been trained in the noxious atmosphere of Stephen's civil wars in the Second, Crusade.

But the patronage of the Crusades was a hereditary distinction in the Angevin family now reigning in England: they had founded the kingdom of Palestine; Henry II. himself had often prepared to set out; and Richard was confidently expected by the great body of his subjects to redeem the family pledge. His whole life had been a preparation

for it, at least on the side of military training; for he had been placed in the charge of his mother's dominions as a boy, and amongst the turbulent barons of Guienne, Gascony, and Poitou his sword had scarcely ever been sheathed. This was quite as much due to his own fierce warlike spirit as to the peculiar position of the territory, which afforded its martial people the ever-ready resource of appeal to the French king whenever they chose to quarrel with his English vassal. Nevertheless the land was prosperous: the great cities grew, and obtained charters from Eleanor their duchess. It was here that Richard learned to be a troubadour,—poet and musician as well as warrior.

Wholly inferior in statesmanlike qualities to his father as he was, the generosity, munificence, and easy confidence of his character made him an almost perfect representative of the chivalry of that age. He was scarcely at all in England, but his fine exploits both by land and sea have made him deservedly a favourite. The depreciation of him which is to be found in certain modern books must in all fairness be considered a little mawkish. A king who leaves behind him such an example of apparently reckless, but really prudent valour, of patience under jealous ill-treatment, and perseverance in the face of extreme difficulties, shining out as the head of the manhood of his day, far above the common race of kings and emperors,—such a man leaves a heritage of example as well as glory, and incites posterity to noble deeds. His great moral fault was his conduct to Henry, and for this he was sufficiently punished; but his parents must each bear their share of the blame. His religion was very much of the same formal kind as that of his father, and the best that can be said of it is that it was better than that of his brother John.

The principle of the Crusades is the same in all alike, and we must here deal with it concisely. We do not hear nowadays any wholesale condemnation of the movement as mere superstitious folly and waste of life. It is now plainly perceived that the people of those ages were substantially right in regarding the Crusades as a means of forcing back the tide of Mohammedan irruption and Asiatic barbarism, at the critical period of extreme danger for Europe. And we are surely right in considering the crusading king-

dom of Palestine as a bulwark of the decrepit Eastern Empire till its time had fully come, and till the delay, thus afforded to Europe, had given pause for the preparation required before it was fit to receive from the East the great gift of the Renaissance. It is now admitted that the survival of any Christianity at all in Asia was due to the Crusades; that the expulsion of the Moors from Spain and Portugal was part of the movement; and that the Knights of Rhodes and Malta, whose splendid valour saved the nations of the Mediterranean, were the direct progeny of previous heroism. We now dispute Gibbon's assertion that the people of Europe would have made an earlier start upwards if they had not dissipated their energies on the Crusades, for they would certainly have been involved in mutual wars without the palliations of religion and charity. In some way or other the castle-bred barons of the feudal ages, who only lived for war, must have been swept away, so that the system might be undermined, not too suddenly, and room made both for the growth of the monarchy and of the Third Estate, previously overpowered. Nor is it reasonable to imagine that organised forces from Europe could have been launched in any other way against the myriad followers of the False Prophet, the heralds of polygamy and slavery. It was the Crusades or nothing. Though England was but slightly affected, the good which resulted to Europe, and by which she indirectly gained, far exceeded the evil. Setting aside the political and constitutional benefits, themselves transcendent, the education of European States in a common school tended to provide manifold bonds of union in trade, language, civilisation, and polish. These remained after the wars, massacres, and vices of the Crusades had passed away. Even the increase of power they brought to the Papacy quickened the process by which it came to topple over from its preposterous height.

The interest of English affairs during Richard's absence languishes under the excitement which attends his almost continuous campaigns. That the war with Philip should be desperate was a necessity of the case. It was the business of that king to pull down the House of Anjou and exalt that of France; and though he has not much title to our respect, he cannot be blamed for his general policy. On the

other hand, both on the Crusade and in France Richard was fighting the battle of the House which the English had very deliberately placed upon its throne; and if the war was kept off its shores, if the troubles of Stephen's reign were not allowed to recur, the country had no right to complain of a taxation or a royal ransom which times of peace enabled it, after all, to bear tolerably well. It took many years yet before the country learnt to acknowledge its sovereign's quarrels as its own; but until it did so it was the English people who were in a false position, not the House of Plantagenet. It would have learnt the lesson sooner had it not been for the contemptible conduct of King John. Yet the absence of Richard, coming immediately after the wise reforms of his father, was teaching another lesson which had to be learnt first, the necessity of absolutely fixed conditions between king and people, which should guarantee the ancestral liberties of the land; and if it had not been for John's delinquencies that might not so soon have been perceived.

The ignoble struggles between the various ecclesiastics who were commissioned by Richard to govern England in his absence were far from commanding respect either for Church or State; but Hubert Walter, the gallant crusader, who strangely combined the offices of Archbishop and Justiciar, must stand out as a man of a far superior type to the rest, and deserving of a passing notice. His fidelity, his practical sagacity, and his soldierly experience well supplied the place of a resident sovereign; yet even in this case, the evils inherent in ecclesiastical government betrayed themselves; for when in the necessary process of putting down a London rising a church was burnt, we find that the anomaly of his double position was seriously felt, and almost destroyed his usefulness.

The two coronations of Richard divide the reign into equal parts. The first coronation has always been referred to as the great precedent for the due performance of these ceremonies. Its careful magnificence was the real apotheosis of the House, summing up the grandeur of Henry's reign, now acknowledged when too late, and graced with the presence of the most kingly man of the age. It was here that the Barons of the Cinque Ports enjoyed their "honours at Court," the purple silk canopy borne on silvered spears

over their sovereign, and the highest place next him at the coronation feast. These were even then "ancient." The Confederation had been reorganised by Henry, and was now to commence the most glorious part of its career. The great maritime position of the Plantagenets made these sovereigns take to the sea. It was Richard who put forth his mother's "Rooles of Oleron," which first brought general order into sea affairs; and meagre as his legislation necessarily was, one of his laws provided for the proper treatment of wrecked shipping.

The second coronation, in 1195, was supposed to be necessary in order to wipe out the degrading stain of the captivity which he had suffered at the dishonoured hands of the Emperor and the base Duke of Austria. And let us also observe that while the king has been unjustly blamed for leaving the government of England to his officials, it has been too much forgotten that he not only understood the wants of seamen, but the needs of the middle classes in towns. This he proved by his practice of granting charters, having probably discovered the wisdom of so doing during his government of Aquitaine, which had already advanced far in this direction. John, who carried the policy still further, was only following his brother's example, which had indeed been set on a smaller scale by their father and mother. It was the policy of the House.

King John.

The reign of King John presents a peculiar difficulty of its own. His character is so bad that historians conceive him to have lost all claim to be allowed credit for any of his actions; and those who would be blamed for wrong-doing in any other reign are supposed to be right when they do the same things in this. The best method of escape from such confusion is to review the sequence of events, and let them interpret themselves. In order to do this, we shall find that the reign must be considered in four divisions. The first will take up the crimes of John and his immediate punishment in the loss of about half the continental possessions which he had inherited. It ends in 1205. 1199–1205.

It should be observed at the outset that ill as John's previous conduct had commanded public confidence, stained with ingratitude, intrigue, rebellion, and falsehood as he was, he is not to be blamed for taking the throne which, on strict hereditary principles, was the right of Arthur, his elder brother's son. We have seen that those principles were not yet held to supersede personal fitness in the next of kin; and Richard's will was in accordance with the formal election of John, which took place both in England and Normandy. But what worse crimes could a man commit than his abduction of the betrothed wife of one of his vassals, the Count de la Marche, immediately after the desertion of his own; and then the murder of Arthur? The first lost him the respect of every respectable person, and raised up implacable enemies. It was the injured Count who stirred up the rebellion of Poitou in 1201. Every baron in both countries felt that he was in the hands of a brutal tyrant. It was not the least bitter part of the punishment that Philip II. was in the matter of lawlessness very little better than the criminal. His action in pronouncing forfeiture on John's refusing to appear before him, without a safe-conduct, to answer for the death of Arthur, was contrary to all feudal principles. Yet there was so little doubt that the youth had been put out of the way by John that the sense of moral right in his expulsion and disgrace prevailed everywhere. His stolid indifference, or futile spasmodic movements during the process were the direct consequence of his own sense of the outrages of which he had been guilty.

As we now part with Normandy till it is recovered for a few years by the Lancastrian House, we ought to remark that, though it lost the distinctly superior freedom it had enjoyed under the English, it still remained more free than the other parts of France; and the same thing happened in Aquitaine after the English had been obliged to relinquish the last hope of recovering their French provinces. And we may further observe that if this loss of the north-French provinces had occurred earlier, it is easy to see that its effect upon England would have been very different. By this time the barons of England had mostly become English; and in default of a wise king to grasp the Angevin inheritance, it was much better that the separation should take place.

The difficulties which attended the allegiance of those who possessed estates on both sides of the Channel were still considerable, but the mass of them had now taken their side, and were forced by their new circumstances to obtain security for their English rights and privileges. The opportunity soon occurred.

The significance of John's expulsion from his north-French inheritance displayed itself in many directions,—perhaps in none more than the development of England as a naval power. The Norman Conquest had turned the British Channel into a sea which was bordered for nearly the whole of both sides by one power, that of the English king, who was also Norman Duke, and had great influence over Brittany. The coast possessions of their Plantagenet descendants made competition for nautical supremacy still more impracticable. Thus the Channel was English, and it was guarded from piracy by the English. But how was this position to be maintained when the coast of France had become French? John was here in full accord with his people when he issued the order from Hastings that his ships should make all others strike their sails to them within what were called "The Narrow Seas." This at least remained of their old superiority. If they could not, under such a criminal as King John, recover the rights of their kings on the land, they could at least take care that they should not be robbed of their sea. That inheritance affected the middle and lower classes as well as the upper. It was already the highway of a commerce to which the kingdom of France could make no pretensions. The guardianship of it had been for several generations in the hands of an organised force, the Cinque Ports Confederation of Kent and Sussex, whose real military strength had scarcely yet been called out. Somebody must keep pirates out of the Channel; the English required no help to do that, and determined that the supremacy of its guard should not be questioned. This was the beginning of what afterwards came to be so well known a term—"the sovereignty of the seas." We too often forget that it sprang out of an undisputed position in earlier times. However, it was very natural that the French, after the great change which had occurred, should declare unceasing war against these pretensions; and the effects of the struggle have left an indelible mark on history.

But John was a king of no mean capacity for military affairs, and he saw plainly that besides the Cinque Ports it was his interest to cultivate the goodwill of the whole nautical population of England, to whom his charters were freely granted,—no doubt for money, but then the Crown gave up lucrative rights. Each reign in succession expanded this policy, as we shall see; and happily, the substantial remnant of Aquitaine afforded just that opening for commerce, and that opportunity for gaining nautical experience which in those ages was sufficient for naval progress. The events of this reign also taught English sovereigns that the custom of hiring mercenaries, which continued to degrade at times the system of the land forces, could not be employed at sea. After John's early success, and then failure to find funds for these dangerous auxiliaries, he discovered that he had in the Cinque Ports system a sufficient staff to lean upon; and though he tried their patience to the uttermost, their confederation did whatever work the country required, without the obnoxious foreigners.

Exactly contemporaneous with the man whose crimes made him the weakest of English kings, sat the Pope who carried the power of the Papacy to the highest point it was ever to reach, the king of kings and lord of lords, Innocent III. The opportunity of a quarrel between John and the monks of Canterbury as to the election of an archbishop to fill Hubert Walter's place in 1204 was too good to be neglected. This most audacious of Popes quietly put aside both nominees, and appointed his own man, Stephen Langton,—a stretch of Papal insolence never yet heard of. He actually consecrated him to the see in 1207. Of course he would not have succeeded if the king had not been John; but bad as John was, he represented in his resistance the inherent national rights of his realm, its inherited claims to ecclesiastical independence. Our second period includes the king's last and futile attempt to recover Anjou, and his expulsion of the recalcitrant monks from their Canterbury monastery; and that raised against him the barons of the Cinque Ports, who were closely allied with the monks. The period ends with the Interdict which Innocent launched against England, in 1208, and which commenced an open war with the ecclesiastical body, while the barons looked on.

1205–1208.

John's first proceeding was to reduce the Cinque Ports to submission by means of his galleys, manned by mercenaries, and various influences now determined the Ports to adhere to his side in the civil war. For his army he was also reduced to depend upon mercenaries, but he was enabled to hold his own, and even more, by his military skill, and by the aid of the few able laymen and ecclesiastics who were not afraid to confront the tyranny of the Pope. The chief of these were William the Marshal; Hubert de Burgh, Earl of Kent; Peter de Roches, Bishop of Winchester; Geoffry Fitzpeter, Earl of Essex; John de Gray, Bishop of Norwich; and Walter de Gray, who became Archbishop of York. To these must be added John's clever naval administrator, William of Wrotham, Archdeacon of Taunton; while, above all, William Longsword, John's half-brother, the Earl of Salisbury, headed the patriots, and was placed in charge of the Midlands.

Thus the third period, from 1208-1212, displayed a very different result from what might have been expected. The Cinque Ports guarded the Channel and perhaps delayed the excommunication, which however arrived at last; and with money, seized cruelly and unscrupulously from the clergy and others of the Pope's adherents, John led his troops to victory in Ireland, in Scotland, and in Wales. Following in the steps of his father, the results of his campaign far exceeded those which Henry had achieved in Ireland, which was now fairly organised, divided into counties, and the "pale" at least subjected to English laws. John de Gray was made Lord Deputy, and for once a momentary peace and order illumined a prospect too generally obscured in gloom. Nor had any previous king been much more successful than John in his Scottish and Welsh campaigns. 1208–1212.

Innocent, discovering that his spiritual weapons were not as keen as he expected, now opens, in 1212, the fourth period, by appealing to his ultimate resource, the dethronement of the contumacious king; and he places that duty in the hands of Philip of France. John at first meets it boldly. Salisbury, an old Warden of the Cinque Ports, leads their fleet and some of the king's ships to Damme in 1213, where Philip's ships were assembled in support of his quarrel with the Emperor and the Flemings. The English victory broke up Philip's campaign for that year. This feat of arms had a 1212–1216.

great effect on sea-affairs. It gave a distinct character to the Cinque Ports, which had hitherto chiefly figured as guardians of the seas, and controllers of the national herring-fishery. In this and in the next reign they took their place as one of the leading powers of the national life, and in those of the Edwards as the recognised right arm of the sovereign. Nor did they yield their place to the king's own navy, so long an inferior body to themselves, till their harbours had silted up, and the temporary superiority of the French in the reign of Richard II. had brought upon them the full vengeance of their ancestral enemies. That they remained on John's side when he was deserted by almost every one else was probably due to the influence of successive wardens, Hubert de Burgh, Salisbury, Fitzpeter, and the elder Wrotham; but their decisive action was reserved for the benefit of the young Henry III., soon after John's death, when, under Hubert de Burgh, they destroyed the French fleet, led by Eustace the Monk, and by that means gave the final blow which drove Louis of France out of the kingdom.

The utter collapse of John's power, after a successful beginning, marks the last period of his miserable reign. He could not trust his regular feudal levies, for he had continuously outraged the barons; nor could mercenaries avail, for his funds failed. Then came the disgraceful surrender of the English Crown to the Pope, the acceptance of Stephen Langton as archbishop, and the consequent blow to Philip, who found himself balked of the conquest of England on which he believed himself about to enter. Shameful as this surrender soon began to appear, it is to be said for John that Innocent III. had contrived to establish the same authority over the greater part of Europe, that it was not so much the disgrace as the deceit that had been practised on the barons which they felt, and that the position was not entirely disclaimed till the reign of Edward III. It was the "noonday of the Papacy," and even a better king, after the terrible issue of the Becket struggle, might not have been more successful.

Who would have thought that it was from this very archbishop, forced upon England by Innocent, that her deliverance from future tyranny, such as John had exercised, was to proceed? Nothing could have been further from the

Pope's intention. He had completely misjudged his man; for Langton, once on English ground, finding John's power destroyed at the battle of Bouvines in 1214, defied Innocent in the name of the barons and people as decidedly as the king himself had defied him, before the surrender of his Crown. The true issue was now at last joined; the old English franchises, promised in so many royal charters, were at last secured by the almost unanimous movement of English Church and State against a king who, when he did wrong, did it outrageously, and when he did right did it in the worst way. Yet in his first stubborn resistance to Innocent he had certainly done right.

We do not concern ourselves here with the details of 1215.
Magna Charta, rightly called the palladium of English liberties. Its importance can never be exaggerated. Enough that retribution overtook the man who of all others most richly deserved it. Enough that the barons of England, who carried their long-suppressed fury so far as to rally round a
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French prince, and almost to hand England over to France, were checked in their mad career, and that the opportune death of John set free a sufficient national force to establish once more the hereditary succession of the Plantagenet Kings of England. This force was led by the Earl Marshal, the renowned William Earl of Pembroke, who at the "Fair of Lincoln" ruined Louis by land as Hubert de Burgh had ruined him by sea, and who governed England as a sort of Regent during the first two years of Henry III.'s minority.

CHAPTER XIX.

HENRY III. (1216-1272).

In considering the reign of Henry II., we saw that the key to it lay in the imperial position which he had obtained both by inheritance and marriage. This position was seriously threatened by Richard I.'s absence on the Third Crusade, for it was of course the natural policy of the French kings to

get rid of vassals who were far greater than themselves; and it received a very serious shock when John, rather by the force of public opinion than by any legal process, was ejected from the northern provinces held by his ancestors in France. Eleanor's inheritance, however, on the whole, stood firm to England, and though Poitou was gradually absorbed, like the northern provinces, by the French kings, the great provinces of Guienne and Gascony with their dependencies, commonly called Aquitaine, remained. They not only remained, but their relations with England took a different shape as soon as Richard, Earl of Cornwall, the king's brother, had re-settled the government. Access from the north of France, and even from Poitou, having been cut off, England now formed a still closer connection with Aquitaine than before, through Bordeaux, which at once became the one great channel of communication between the two countries. Its splendid situation, the subsequent importance of its wine-trade, and the extraordinary advantages afforded by the river-system of Aquitaine for water-carriage, together with the facility with which it could supply its own wants from England far better than from any other country, connected the two parts of the empire together in bonds of mutual benefit which it took two centuries more to break, and which only snapped under the general collapse of the unfortunate reign of Henry VI.

Henry III. had in some respects a more varied and intimate relation with the Continent than any one of the Plantagenets. He was the ward of the Popes, who stood by him from first to last, destined him to be their champion against their French and Italian enemies, and finally insisted upon making his son Edmund King of Sicily. In France he proclaimed himself the avenger of the wrongs sustained by the English under his father, and as such was the elected head of the turbulent princes who hoped to break down the power of the Regent Blanche before Louis IX. should come of age. Through his sister Isabella he became brother-in-law of the great Emperor Frederick II., and by his own marriage with Eleanor of Provence, the brother-in-law of Charles of Anjou and of St Louis himself. Nor were these merely formal relations. Several of the letters which passed between Henry and the neighbouring potentates are still extant, and exhibit these crowned heads as members of one family. His visits to

his Gascon provinces were three in number, and each of them for considerable periods. Thus his son Edward was trained to be his father's representative, and became even more concerned with the affairs of Aquitaine than himself. His grandson and great-grandson, Edward II. and Edward III., took up a similar position.

Now, to fulfil these obligations, not only was money required, but the goodwill of the English nobles and people. Henry had neither, but it was not altogether his fault. His son, the greatest of all English sovereigns, found himself in much the same difficulty, and only emerged from it by establishing the beneficent system of self-taxation by representative Parliaments. The country was not yet ripe for that great measure, nor was Henry the man to make the experiment. His revenues were absurdly small. The royal Exchequer was supplied on the scale of a feudal lord rather than that of a king, still less of an emperor; and the methods by which it was filled were all but unavailable as soon as the people acquired any substantial power. The chief sources of revenue—loans, purveyance, tallage, clergy-tenths, fairs, forests, and the profits from the Jews—tell their own tale. The time had in truth come for the national wealth to be used for the raising of troops which were to conserve and protect the hereditary possessions of the king; but it was precisely here that he could not carry with him the goodwill of the nation. Though the people of England had solemnly accepted the House of Plantagenet with all their continental entanglements, they pretended to consider that their king was only personally concerned in the contest with the King of France for the recovery of his dominions. Now this was strictly true, but virtually false. Henry acted honourably in making the necessary demand on the national resources; the English scarcely as honestly in refusing to accede to it.

On the other hand, the weak and inconsistent character of Henry III. gave but poor promise that the national funds would be used with effect; there was a sort of instinctive feeling that the people ought to have more control over these funds than was possible before Parliaments came to represent their will; and all respect for the king rapidly disappeared under the system of mendicancy and mendacity into which he gradually fell. These degrading habits were very much

due to the prevalence of Papal dispensations, which a devout ward of the Popes learnt to consider a perfectly normal state of things. Hubert de Burgh represented the national distrust when he obeyed the king's commands to muster his troops at Portsmouth, but took care to have no ships ready to transport them to France. And yet it was an unpardonable insult.

Perhaps the difficulty which has been found in dealing fairly with this reign, and until lately, with that of Edward I., lies in confusing the rightful policy of these kings with the accidental circumstances attending the methods of procuring funds by which it might be carried into action. It is, as we have said, forgotten that England had become, under the Norman and Plantagenet kings, a great imperial Power, and not a mere insular kingdom. It was not till Parliaments were in full operation that the eyes of the nation were opened to this fact; but it is unfortunate that so many writers are unable to perceive it even now. If it had been understood we should not have seen the long series of chequered wars with France classed amongst the ambitious acts of merely combative kings of England, but dignified as the just attempts of patriots to recover what was their own. The desperate struggles which have dyed the history of both countries with crimson stains would then appear in a different light. And when the continental inheritance was irrecoverably gone, it would be seen that the eager, persistent, and at length successful efforts of the English to balance the continental Powers with one another, while they extended their nautical empire over the world, were by no means solely due to dynastic, or constitutional, or religious conflicts, but may be traced to an inbred sense of an imperial destiny, of which the earlier history of England had afforded already more than one great example.

The key, then, to Henry III.'s reign is to be found, as in that of Henry II., in his imperial position. He grew up under the tutorship of Peter de Roches, an Anglo-Poitevin, to whom he owed his religious and moral character—not, indeed, one of the highest type, but very different from what might have been expected in the son of John and Isabella. The idea of wiping out the disgrace of his father, and recovering, at the head of the French princes, the Plantagenet

dominions, was familiar to him from the first. When he was twenty years of age Pope Honorius III. called upon the French Regent, Blanche, to restore to his royal ward the provinces carried off wrongfully by Philippe Auguste, and the restoration of which was solemnly promised by his son Louis at the Treaty which enabled him to escape to France in 1216. The Regent, on the other hand, had no idea of any such surrender, and, in spite of great difficulties, she rallied around her banner sufficient forces to crush the ill-compacted confederacy of the rebels. So also Louis IX., when he came of age, equally prevailed over a prince whose personal incapacity for war was made still more conspicuous by the failure of support from England. In vain did Henry order the Royal Navy of the Cinque Ports to devastate the French coast. They willingly obeyed his orders, but were quite unsupported, and soon discovered that they were too feeble to resist by themselves the whole navy of those coasts, loyally arrayed against them.

Henry's failure might have been complete had not Louis IX. been both a wise and conscientious prince. Believing that his father's Treaty ought to have been carried out, he gave Henry the most favourable terms, and renounced all claim upon Aquitaine except the old suzerainty, on condition that Henry, in his turn, should relinquish all claims on the northern provinces and Poitou. This was not only noble and conscientious, it was also wise; for France was not yet in a position to amalgamate the whole of the domains within her suzerainty, and was really stronger for leaving Aquitaine alone. Under these arrangements the English government of those provinces, though much troubled at times, became firmer than it had ever been before; while friendly relations with France were maintained even through the reign of St Louis's son, Philip III. A new chapter of history began with Philip IV., or the Fair.

It was then perfectly natural that Henry should deal with the affairs of England from a point of view which was not the same as that of the mass of the English barons and people, and not at all surprising that he should commit the mistake of placing himself at the head of the French party amongst his subjects, with their French ideas of politics, led as they were by a great man, Peter de Roches, Bishop of

Winchester, rather than under the political guidance of Hubert de Burgh, the well-tried rival of the Bishop, and the representative of the English party. This could only end one way. Peter could only prevail by the aid of his countrymen of Poitou, on whom he could rely; and thus the king learnt to prefer the services of the French subjects of his House to the English, and even included along with them the Provençals and Savoyards, the relations of his queen, who were altogether foreigners. Marching in line with these interlopers, the papal ecclesiastics, with their incessant encroachments on the rights of lay patrons, and followed by an army of papal tax-gatherers, were guilty of innumerable outrages, and visibly took possession of the land. At last the English, provoked beyond bearing, rose in rebellion.

Henry's virtues, as well as his faults, determined his course. A man of active habits and personal courage, possessed of many accomplishments, a kindly, forgiving man, not without a certain kind of ability, he was on the other hand rash, weak, passionate, false, and superstitious. It was an unbalanced character, and yet it is plain that precisely such a man was required to fit into the place which he was to occupy in the roll of history. In Aquitaine the stern violence of Simon de Montfort, unchecked in putting down revolts, would have ruined the imperial position,—long before its time. The mild virtues of Henry, unequal to the task of repression, laid the foundation of affection on which Edward I. built his solid structure of peace and goodwill. In England the twenty years' ascendancy of the foreign favourites developed the capacity of Earl Simon for heading the English party; and the subsequent gradual overthrow of that party, after a substantial success, educated the still greater capacity of the young Edward in the school of adversity from whence he learnt to view all sides of the great subjects with which he had to deal. The extortions of Pope and king, and the failure of mere confirmations of Magna Charta to bring relief, were all leading up to organised resistance when the time should be ripe, and preparing the English mind for the anti-Papal struggles which under Edward I. and Edward III. found leaders of a very different kind from the miserable John. For all this period we have the splendid Chronicle of Matthew Paris, cosmopolitan and various as the times, himself an

ambassador and courtier, sparing no man in his keen criticism, and enshrining many an important document, of which, but for him, we should have had no knowledge.

The year 1258, famous for the "Provisions of Oxford" and for what was practically the commencement of the Barons' Revolt, divided the forty-two years of the reign covered by the above remarks from the succeeding period of conflict to which those years had led up. Two generations had elapsed since the expulsion of John from North France; and great progress was being made by the English in the arts of peace, in political experience, and in the sense of free national life. When Henry's incompetence was exhibited in the threatening attitude of Scotland and Wales, without on his part any power whatever to defend the country, the thunder-cloud burst, and the barons rose to save the king from his satellites, the land from ruin. It was a legitimate rising. Who was to be at the head? No one presented himself for leader who could compare with Simon de Montfort, the king's brother-in-law, well tried in war and peace, the favourite of the friars, who had but recently arrived and were still popular, of the city of London, and of the Cinque Ports. It would be hopeless to describe this interesting and complicated struggle in a few lines. It should be studied in some special history like that of Mr Blaauw, or in Lives of Montfort, like those of M. Bémont or Mr Prothero. 1258.

Every one must judge for himself how far Earl Simon deserves the extravagant eulogy which has of late years, under a reaction from the old royalist views, been showered upon him. Perhaps the best course will be to distinguish his earlier period, when he was the friend of Grossetête and champion of the popular rights, from the later time when he allowed himself to be carried away by the force of circumstances, and apparently the hope of a crown. Suffice it to say that, useful as he was to England as the successful agent in a rightful resistance, and laudable for his happy experiment of summoning burgesses to the Parliament which he called in the name of the captive king, it was far more useful that Edward should have learnt from him the art of war and the spirit of constitutional freedom, and that the future king should have risen to power on the Earl's defeat and death at Evesham in 1266. Edward, now recognised as holding the

1266. headship of England, began his uncrowned kingship from that moment. He had saved the monarchy by his victory, but by studying the causes of his father's failure he preserved it, and made it glorious for all time.

The brevity of this sketch must by no means be taken to indicate that the subject can be passed over as a matter of small importance. It is only intended to serve as a guide to the principles involved. The exceeding length of the struggle made it tedious to Hume and Lingard, and its unique interest on certain points, especially as regards its continental significance, was not formerly understood. On the other hand, the reaction has too often shown itself in a lengthy style of narrative in which the thread is nearly lost, and the issues obscured. But even for the mere digest here attempted a few further observations are still required.

Henry III. inherited a realm left in the utmost disorder by his father's misgovernment and the consequent Civil War. His extrication from the dangers which beset his youth was due to men of courage and ability, but not statesmen of a high order. William Marshal, Earl of Pembroke, who had all the elements of that character, died soon after he had expelled the French. Hubert de Burgh was wanting in the moderation and self-sacrifice which were necessary to keep even a brave and ardent patriot afloat in a sea of troubles such as beset England at that time. Bishop Peter, his rival, was in some respects a great man, and Matthew Paris's praise of him ought to modify the adverse opinions generally expressed by modern writers. But with a busy and active king, deficient in judgment and governed by Papal Legates, no superior statesmanship could be exhibited. It was a reign of shuffling expedients and scrambling administration. Stephen Langton, the Archbishop, could do but little to qualify the disorders which he was forced to witness, and Edmund Rich, his amiable successor, found his only refuge from despair in exile. From the time of Henry's marriage in 1236 the king kept himself independent of even such control as he had previously suffered, and the highest type of minister is the brave and dexterous priest, John Mansel, who seems to have been little more than Henry's agent in his evil courses. The hope of the nation presents itself in the person of Earl Simon, not by any means a perfect instru-

ment for the work, but the best which could be found till the young prince, his pupil, could take his place.

That the mediocrity of the statesmanship of the reign was really due to the peculiar, or, if we may so call them, accidental, circumstances of Church and State may be gathered from the fact that this was the very century when England, somewhat later than the rest of Western Europe, was experiencing the most lively impulse of intellectual vigour which she was destined to receive before the Renaissance. The wave had reached her shores by the agency of her Universities, which in this more than in any other age formed a living bond with other nations. A universal Republic of Literature, propagated by a common language, made itself felt in France, in Italy, in Spain, and in England. Great names emerge at Oxford, which began to rival Paris, her elder sister. Grossetête, Friar Bacon, Duns Scotus, and the rest of the literary brotherhood became the leaders of multitudes, and their eager dialectics penetrated into every branch of human thought and action.

Perhaps in no way, though less observed, was the peculiar genius of the English more powerfully displayed than in the scientific formulation of its Common Law. Bracton and his compeers were gathering up the fundamental ideas of political and social life, and moulding into shape the settled resistance of the English mind, fed upon ancient precedents, against the imported Roman Law which had already dominated the awakened intellect of the Continent. Under the skilful teaching of the clerical body, to whom the advance of the human mind was so much indebted, the Civil and Canon Law were making their way steadily in England as elsewhere—the former having been taught in Oxford as early as Stephen's reign. Each had its work to do, and it has remained; but the English training had been too deep and too wide for submission to foreign systems, and it had able exponents on the Judicial Bench, both in the London Courts, already divided off pretty much as they are still, and on the itinerant progresses of the judges in the counties.

In connection with this long-cherished Common Law was growing up a more and more defined national spirit, displayed in the rudimentary Parliaments which throughout this reign herald the advent of a complete representation of the com-

munity. In the Petition of all the component parts of the nation against the Papal exactions they call themselves the *universitas regni*, and the same idea of wholeness and common fellowship deeply influenced both Oxford and Cambridge, where the thing, without the name of "University," had been in flourishing existence for some generations. The expulsion from North France had much to do with this growth of nationality, for it delivered a large body of landholders from the attempt to serve two masters, while the persistent efforts of the Poitevin loyalists, who could hardly be blamed for seeking compensation in England for their losses in the English service, appealed to the middle classes in favour of "England for the English." The chartered towns were also now strong and populous as well as free.

Thus, while accidental circumstances prevented the rise of any great English leader of the constitutional movement, the leaven of intelligent historical freedom was actively working throughout the mass, and prompting the incessant demand of Parliament for a share in the appointment of ministers, and the redress of grievances before the grant of supplies. That the king so often evaded his solemn promises by means of Papal dispensations, generated, along with the demand for constitutional government, a spirit of anti-Papalism which not even the fame of the friars nor the Canterbury Pilgrimages could dispel, and which soon found abundant expression. The pregnant words of Bracton might have been taken as the text of the Barons' war: "Let the king give to the law what the law gives to him, dominion and power; for there is no king where will, and not law, bears rule."

Happily the lesson which it was almost impossible for Henry to learn, Edward took to heart, but not without, when his supreme trial came, some considerable pressure from the national will, which was never again to relinquish what it had gained during the thirteenth century. It should, however, be said that even if Henry had been a stronger man and less enslaved to the Papacy by early education, he could hardly have been expected to cut himself loose from its toils. The spell cast over Europe by Innocent III. took nearly a century to dissolve. His gigantic attempt to govern Europe by means of a vast ecclesiastical organisation, under which the

king of each country was to play a mere subordinate part, was doomed to failure; but his successors never desisted from following in his footsteps till France interposed, and practically imprisoned them at Avignon. The literary discoveries of the age, the revival of learning, the adoption of the familiar feudal framework into ecclesiastical politics, were each and all embraced as supports of a cause which denounced all opposition as heresy, and used the Interdict and Excommunication as everyday weapons of war. The able and accomplished Emperor Frederick II. was shattered to pieces against this solid wall of sacerdotalism. St Louis alone retained some independence, but on material points was at one with the system. Henry III. was simply taken up as a component part of it. He was not a St Louis.

Our First Book of English History thus ends with the apparent collapse of all the devices by which the relations of English, Danes, Normans, and French to one another had been brought into some sort of order. A righteous revolt against a feeble and tyrannical government had been absolutely crushed, and who could forecast the future? It turned out, however, that the obstructions were only temporary. The work of the past had not been in vain; the foundations laid during so many ages were solid and firm. It only required a master-builder to erect a corresponding structure. Such a master was found in Edward I.

BOOK II.

FROM THE REIGN OF EDWARD I. TO THE REVOLUTION.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY—PERIOD OF THE THREE EDWARDS.

THAT all previous English history centres in Edward I., and all subsequent history radiates from his reign—a remark which can only be made of one other English sovereign, Alfred the Great—is a good reason for beginning a second and distinct period with this great king; but it will be found convenient to form an introductory chapter out of the common characteristics of the two next reigns, taken together with his own. They possess a certain unity which we cannot but trace to the impulse given by the first of the series, and which was powerful enough to carry the nation without serious loss through the perilous times of his degenerate son. 1272–1377.

As we thus connect Edward I. with his two successors, so we may assign him a special place after his two predecessors. Without a king precisely such as John the nation might have failed to consecrate in its infancy the right of resistance to tyranny. Without a Henry III. it might have failed to learn the art of combination against the rule of foreigners, against Papal dictation, and against ecclesiastical claims to immunity from law. But without an Edward I. it could hardly have

leaped, as it were, in the course of one generation, out of a chaos of conflict into the settled government, the united society, the commanding position for peace or war, to which England at his death had visibly attained. When he succeeded his aged father the barons were all but petty sovereigns; the clergy had not yet learnt that they were the king's subjects; the Pope still claimed coequal government in the land; the people had scarcely yet appeared, much less interfered, as a distinct factor in the State. By the time he died all were working harmoniously together.

Let us first notice the link between the Edwards supplied by the French wars. Perhaps there is no phrase which has been more disastrous to the interests of history than the term "the Hundred Years' War." We reckon the years from Edward III.'s assumption of the title of "King of France," and close them with the disasters of Henry VI.'s reign. The previous conflicts are forgotten in the terrible series of victories, defeats, and devastations, with the story of which we have been familiar from our childhood. But enough has been said already to show that the contest was unavoidable from the moment of Henry II.'s marriage with Eleanor of Guienne, just before he ascended the English throne. How long under their growing power the suzerains of France would have borne with the close and dangerous neighbourhood of the English Dukes of Normandy, planted, with their dependencies, at their very doors, no one can say; but when to these territories were added Anjou, Poitou, and Aquitaine, the position of such a vassal became intolerable. More than half France, and nearly all its coast, was, as they would say, under the government of the king of a petty insular people who had once been conquered by an expedition equipped from the shores of France, and had only recently been torn to pieces by the civil war of Stephen's reign. It could only be a question of time and opportunity when these turbulent islanders should be ejected and sent back home. We have seen how easy the process had been in the case of the northern provinces and the miserable John; how Henry III. failed to recover them, or to save Poitou; and how, through the good sense and honourable magnanimity of St Louis, amicable relations had been established, which lasted till after the death of his son, Philip III.

This was an exceptional peace of about half a century, and we are now called upon to observe the effect of it. On the one hand, it gave the English a position in Aquitaine which enabled them to hold their own for two centuries. On the other hand, it formed those great and wealthy provinces into a prosperous English dependency, which excited jealousy and alarm in the mind of Philip IV., a very different sort of king from his immediate predecessors. All the old resolutions to get rid of the English were now revived, and soon set in motion the various agencies which once more brought on the war. Fortunately the reign of Edward I. was nearly half over before Philip's policy bore fruit, and the Peace of 1303 provided for his son a respite—but a respite of which he was so little able to make use that the English provinces were gradually surrounded with a ring of hostile neighbours, and before he died were already in the greatest danger. They were saved for a time by Edward III. and the Black Prince, but the war had become almost continuous.

We naturally ask how it has come to pass that the English Rule in Aquitaine, the central fact round which all French and English history revolved for three centuries, finds so insignificant a place in the books to which we resort for information. The answer is simple. When history began to be written, the Rule had passed away, and neither nation cared to dwell upon it; nor had they the materials for any large proportion of its details. The one trustworthy source of information, the Gascon Rolls, was not available. These Rolls, containing the official acts of the English Government relative to Aquitaine, were deposited, when the Rule came to an end, in the Tower of London, and have only of late years been placed where they could be consulted, at the Record Office. For purposes of history they have hitherto been nearly useless; but the Governments of Great Britain and France, finding that numerous private attempts at publication had failed, resolved in 1891 on a joint operation, creditable alike to both countries, the former undertaking to have the Rolls photographed and transmitted to the latter, which has accepted the far more onerous and responsible task of transcribing, editing, and publishing the series.[1] This must

1153–1453.

[1] See the paper on this subject read before the Royal Historical Society—'Transactions' for 1892.

strike every one as a spectacle more agreeable than that of the perennial struggle which fills so many of these pages, but which, nevertheless, had its work to do in the world-drama.

The publication of those famous Rolls will be of rare value, if only for the light which they throw upon the mutual commerce of two portions of the English dominions; for all English products found their way from London and Bristol to Bordeaux and Bayonne, for the consumption of a population perhaps larger than that of England, and probably more prosperous: while the conveyance of the wines of Aquitaine to the English ports in large fleets employed numerous seamen, and formed a trade scarcely, if at all, inferior to the wool-trade with Flanders, of which alone we have any considerable notice. There was scarcely a family of any pretensions which was not concerned in the government or commerce of these provinces. The municipal advance of their busy and clever citizens, especially at Bordeaux, was superior to that of the English; for the freedom of the middle and lower classes was hereditary from early Roman times, and had not been seriously affected by the barbarian conquests. At the same time, the nobles, by no means less distinguished for martial turbulence than their brethren of the north and centre of France, preferred the rule of their hereditary dukes, the distant kings of England, to that of the French kings who were much too close at hand. In polish, elegance, culture, and perhaps wealth, the people of these provinces were superior to the English subjects of their lords. How it can ever have been supposed that the kings of England could tamely give up this grand inheritance except under compulsion is a mystery; but as they neither could nor would do so, all the costs of its defence had to be found, and all the constitutional progress which sprang out of the necessity of defending them was the result. In the last resort, after evading the question for a century, even the reluctant English people found they could not stand by and quietly allow Philip VI. to rob them of their allies, friends, relations, and customers; and this they showed plainly when they had exchanged the incapable Edward II. for princes whom they could trust to lead them, Edward III. and his sons.

The failure of the English to accept their imperial position for so long a time may be regarded from another point of

view. Under Henry III., and through nearly all the reign of Edward I., the gulf between king and people had been too great to admit of any strong development of a common national policy, and it is now easy to see that it was well for both countries that the delay occurred. England, Scotland, and South France, securely welded together as they might have been, had it not been for Philip IV.'s aggression, might have proved too strong for the steady growth of a united France, always essential to the European balance; too strong also for the establishment of the English liberties. As it was, the French gain was in reality also the gain of England, which was pruned that it might sprout again, while France rounded off her disjointed territories. By the time of Edward III. the nation had learnt to act as one man, and its success proved what it was capable of doing. It soon learnt also the limits of its power; and the subsequent disasters under Richard II. were perhaps as useful to the nation as those which had taken place under Edward II. In short, the alternation of strong and weak kings has been by no means an unmitigated evil. Viewed as a whole, we can see how each was working out the end of which the world of to-day is the living witness.

With regard to the treatment of Aquitaine the weak Henry and the strong Edward were in general agreement. We have seen that Henry had the merit of perceiving that, access by land routes having been lost, Bordeaux must be made the great central meeting-point of Englishmen and Gascons. That noble city now made a rapid advance, and became worthy of its position. Though often exhibiting the weakness and inconsistency of his character, Henry evinced a steady resolution to conciliate the people; and when they took advantage of him and required the rough hand of Earl Simon, he took care to show his disapproval of harsh measures. But the wisest thing he did was to send his incomparable son to govern the provinces as his lieutenant, even during his early youth; to marry him to the most admirable princess of the age, Eleanor of Castile; and to employ him for years in building up the fabric of good government. Here Edward converted turbulent barons into firm friends; and here, especially in his later residences, he projected a series of free towns,—"Villes Anglaises," "Villesfranches,"

and "Bastides,"—into the midst of districts which had been exclusively feudal; here he trained Gascons for his service in England, formed alliances with the kings of Castile and Aragon, and lavished on his province all the sagacity, energy, and public spirit which he displayed in the still greater work of his life performed in England itself. It was this renovated English Aquitaine which Philip the Fair envied and feared. He had no sympathy with the enlarged policy of his father and grandfather, which had allowed such a state of things to grow up on the basis of treaty-right and good neighbourhood; and thus, when the pressure of Scottish affairs upon Edward gave him the opportunity, he renewed the policy of Philippe Auguste, and devoted himself to the expulsion of the English with all his heart. From the view of a constantly growing French monarchy his conduct was, as we have said, natural, and soon came to be reckoned patriotic.

It was now that France began its intimate alliance with Scotland, on the basis of hostility to England. Edward's resolution to use what he conceived to be his feudal rights in the annexation of that country was no doubt taken with a view to strengthen his position in Aquitaine. The ties of royal marriage which had hitherto bound the conterminous countries together had snapped, and the danger to which his foreign provinces were exposed by the diversion of his troops to oppose French intrigues in Scotland was pressing. France of course found the support of the Scots a useful policy. It deeply coloured the reigns of all the Edwards as well as those of their successors.

The wars which thus characterised the reigns of this period developed the English strength by land and sea. Edward I.'s Statute of Winton organised the forces supplied by Henry II.'s Assize of Arms, and added greatly to the national strength. But the principle of employing regular troops with regular pay was also making its way, and in the course of the Edwardian century became the rule. The individualism and independence of a feudal levy almost changed in Edward III.'s hands into a modern cavalry. Under the management of Sir John Brocas, his Gascon Master of the Horse, he placed the great equestrian establishment which he planted in the royal manors scattered over England; and all the component parts of an army were taught to work together

in a manner not very different from the practice of modern times. The archers with their long bows develop their excellence along with the cavalry, and are found useful in battle just in proportion as each arm supports the other.

The three Edwards also asserted and retained the Sovereignty of the seas, the ancient English right which had been seriously imperilled under John and Henry III. The Navy of the Cinque Ports was, as we have seen, their agent in the process; but it had become so independent since the experiences of the Barons' war that it required the whole skill and patience of the great king who had reduced it to order to make it an efficient and disciplined force. It was not by Edward I.'s will that, maddened by insult and injury, it fought, in 1293, a preconcerted duel with the fleets of France off St Mahé, and absolutely destroyed the enemy in a gale of wind; but he knew how to deal with a splendid material not to be lightly thrown aside, and employed it, under the control of his novel institution of Admirals, in the conquest both of Wales and Scotland. Such as he left the "Royal Navy of the Cinque Ports," such it continued in the reigns of his two successors. It was the centre and model of the whole marine of England, including the king's own ships, which were not in a position to supersede it till near the close of the Middle Ages. If it had not been at hand to defend the coasts, the failures of Edward II. would have been more disastrous still; and it formed the bulk of the sea-force which gave Edward III. his brilliant victories. When we consider that the leading position of the Cinque Ports lasted for something like five centuries, we are the less inclined to wonder that it is unique in the history of the world. The career of the Hanse Towns alone approaches it, but the differences are essential.

The ecclesiastical history of England during these three reigns has also a unity of its own. The fierce struggle between the kings who represented the national rights, and the clergy who defied them, had ended disastrously for the former. The bulwark erected by Henry II. in the Assize of Clarendon had proved powerless against the Popes, who subdued John and enslaved his son. It required a king very different from any that had yet arisen to break the spell. Such a king was Edward I. — irreproachable in

private life, a devout pupil, in a very real sense, of St Louis, a statesman from his boyhood, with a wider experience than had yet fallen to any monarch of Christendom, and gifted with that rare combination of the soldier and the general which enabled him to face any odds with intrepidity. Thus it fell to him not only to repel the Papal interference with State affairs, but to bring to a summary conclusion the main position which the clergy of England had, since the death-triumph of Becket, taken up with impunity.

In their fixed resolution to obey the Pope rather than the king in matters of taxation, it was as well that the clergy were headed by a primate who had imbibed from his birth at the old turbulent Winchelsea, which had just sunk beneath the waves, a spirit as resolute as that of Edward himself. Otherwise the issue might not have been final. As it was, when no other course remained, and the king adopted the extreme measure of treating the whole clerical body as outlaws, dire experience soon taught them that they could not in affairs of life and property serve two masters; and the lesson once taught, never required to be repeated. The archbishops of the following reigns were, with scarcely an exception, men who were quite unable to fight the battle over again; and, indeed, it was a failing cause in more respects than one. The friars, who in Henry III.'s reign came in with a rush of public favour to supersede the worn-out monastic system, and to support the Popes who were their patrons, were already losing their short-lived popularity. Complaints arose against them both from the secular clergy and the monks, and they were soon discovered to have fallen from their first standard very much in the same way of corruption as the various orders of monks which arose one after another with the same object of superseding a previously deteriorated body. Against this Papal bodyguard of friars, who had planted themselves firmly at the Universities of Europe, Oxford became the centre of resistance. A succession of philosophers dominated the tumultuous intellect of the place, and though some of them were themselves friars, they led the way to a freer and nobler atmosphere of thought. They were, in fact, each of them unwitting precursors of the great Wiclif, with whom the hollow system of the medieval church comes to an end, and its modern history begins.

This, of course, must not be taken literally, but only as marking the steady current of the national mind. The decaying fabric of the Middle Ages was to keep its place in outward show for one hundred and fifty years after Wiclif's death, 1384.
and then to break down with a crash. Its ancient support in the Papacy had been sapped away by the residence of the Popes at Avignon for the seventy years of the "Babylonish 1306–
Captivity"; then by the Schism of the Papacy, which lasted 1376.
for forty years more; then by the uprising of Europe in the 1378–
Councils which arraigned the Popes at their bar; and finally 1417.
by the shocking degradation of the Papacy itself. It is the 1409;
second of these events, the Papal Schism, which brings the 1415.
teaching of Wiclif before the world at the end of the Edwardian century now under review. That piercing voice could not have made itself heard unless the time had come; and Edward I.'s summons to the clergy was the first step towards the necessary silence. We will place ourselves amongst his hearers after we have noted the leading outlines of the three reigns in a little more detail.

CHAPTER II.

EDWARD I. (1272–1307) AND EDWARD II. (1307–1327).

To understand how the "Greatest of all the Plantagenets"[1] towered above all the sovereigns who had ruled since the Norman Conquest, his career must be studied before he proceeded on the Seventh Crusade, as well as after he was actually crowned in 1274. There is much we may yet hope to

[1] The anonymous author of this book performed in 1860 one of the greatest services rendered to history in modern times. He redeemed the character of Edward I. from the erroneous treatment which it had received for more than a century. The present writer believes himself to have been the first to draw attention to this achievement in a lecture delivered at Oxford, and printed (1) in the 'Transactions of the Oxford Architectural and Historical Society' in 1864, and (2) in his book entitled 'Constitutional Progress' (Murray), now out of print. All subsequent writers on English history have accepted this return to the older view of Edward I.

learn about that earlier career, but we know enough already to appreciate the early education of the future hero in a pure and religious, if superstitious, Court, and to realise the conflict which must have been familiar to his early life between the respect due to an affectionate parent, and the disgust which the follies of that parent must have occasioned. Early marriage of the best type, early responsibility, and constant military duty were preparing him for his kingly career, and in the Barons' war we trace the course of a man who pursued the right whatever the temptation might be to deflect on either side. Not even did the ascendancy of Earl Simon over his young pupil and friend blind him to the errors into which the great earl was hurried by the course of events. Well aware that the evil government of his father had previously justified rebellion, he stepped to the front when the crown was humbled to the dust; and when a reforming baronage had become an intolerable oligarchy, he resolutely barred the way. No one but himself could have succeeded in that perilous enterprise. Victor or vanquished, he would not see the monarchy of England destroyed. It was not only that his father was to be saved and his own inheritance secured, but it was now the cause of England,—just as much as the resistance to bad government had been a sacred duty undertaken at peril of lives and fortunes by the baronage and the governing citizens of the land, the City of London, and the Cinque Ports.

Perhaps we obtain a still deeper insight into Edward's real character when we observe the wisdom and clemency with which he resettled the country after the severe struggle it had passed through. No blood was shed upon the scaffold, no attainders passed, except of the Montforts who placed themselves beyond mercy, no ruinous fines levied. So completely was the passion of the Civil War calmed down that no difficulties attended his departure for the Crusade, nor showed themselves on the death of the aged king, nor even hurried home his successor from his beloved Aquitaine. Those provinces must be completely settled before proceeding to the reforms which he was contemplating for his island-realm. It had already become his special characteristic to convince his opponents of his power in the first place, to treat them afterwards with the utmost clemency, and then to seek out

and remove the causes of discontent. Here, then, we have the proof of a rigorous apprenticeship in practical politics.

That Edward's reign must be regarded as a deliberate application to England of all that he had previously learnt and experienced, has only recently come to be understood, or rather recovered from the eclipse which had obscured it in the eighteenth century, when Hume commenced, in the supposed interest of Scotland, the detraction which for a time became infectious with authors. It is, indeed, in relation to the king's treatment of Scotland that we most require light upon his motives, and most desire to find grounds for believing that he was not, in spite of appearances, acting inconsistently with the course of his whole life. Let us in these outlines regard the Scottish campaigns not as an isolated series of events, but in connection with the whole civil and military policy of the reign.

We may well suppose that Edward's Scottish policy had been long premeditated. He was absent from England for nearly five years after the conclusion of the Civil War. At many Courts, in the midst of many adventures, not so purposeless as those of a knight-errant, but exceeding them in romantic incidents, he had taken the measure of European affairs. The world was ringing with the praises of his friend and uncle St Louis, who was just dead. It is reasonable to trace many of Edward's acts to the example of that great king, who knew so well how to use and expand the feudal system of his times in such a manner as to develop beneath its shadow the reforms which he saw were urgently required. A certain tone of severity accompanied this process, even in the conduct of St Louis, and it is to be found in that of Edward. The feudal system was nothing unless it was a reality. It was a series of mutual compacts and obligations which must be kept on one side as well as on the other. Under a weak king and a disorganised realm it was a mere cloak for iniquity of every sort. On Edward's monument in Westminster Abbey may still be read his famous motto, *Pactum serva*. It signified his unalterable resolution that every one should do his duty, if it was in his power to make him do it. It was an abiding protest against the anarchy of his father's reign; but it could not be practised without severity, without a frequent exercise of power, and a frequent

rebellion of spirits as resolute as his own. In Alfred the Great's noble career we find traces of the same accusation. The military reformer is always exposed to it, not seldom unjustly.

The civil reforms of the reign fall for the most part under the heading of Legal and Constitutional History. Under the former we have to study what Blackstone calls his "Establishments," something of a more lasting and superior kind than merely isolated laws. By some of these the whole feudal system was modified and opened out; by others was arranged the police of the country. Questions of taxation introduce us to the great landmark of his reign, the permanent formation of representative Parliaments,—a formation to
1265. which Montfort's experiment, only partially carried out, had led the way; but none the less was it the direct fruit of Edward's famous saying, that "whatever concerned all should be debated by all." It is true that this system was more or less forced upon the king by the refusal of the nation to supply funds unless through their representatives; but none the less was it due to his remarkable skill in perceiving when it was necessary to give way to popular demands. He met his people more than half-way. Who could have foreseen that it was to be through the painful process of the wars with Wales, France, and Scotland that the beneficent result of regular parliamentary assemblies of Lords and Commons, accompanied by equally regular assemblies of the clergy, for purposes of taxation, would be brought about? It was thus that England became the mother of Parliaments, now the recognised mode of government almost throughout the civilised world.

The justice of Edward's annexation of Wales has only been obscured by wilful ignorance, and demands therefore only one or two remarks. We cannot, of course, but admire the spirit of patriotism and independence so finely exhibited both in Wales and Scotland, but Wales had long ceased to have any right to remain a thorn in the side of England. Unlike the homage of Scotland, there was no dispute as to the homage due from the Welsh princes. Llewellyn, who had been Montfort's most active ally, refused homage; and that was an act of war. By the help of the Cinque Ports' Navy and a judicious use of English and Gascon troops, the Snowdonian

range of mountains, hitherto found an impregnable fortress, ceased to protect the prince. Llewellyn surrendered, received a pardon, and married, at Edward's expense, Montfort's daughter, his affianced bride. The terms of the peace were no doubt inconsistent with the cherished ideas of the Welsh independence; but as David, the Prince's brother, soon after made a sudden and barbarous inroad into the English territory, he justly suffered punishment as a traitor, and the Prince having been already killed in a chance encounter, 1282.
Wales was annexed, consummately organised, and conciliated. It now passed over the title of its prince to Edward's infant son, born in 1284 at Carnarvon, whom his father justly described as unable to speak a word of English; and with the eldest sons of English kings it has remained. The history of the subsequent ages has surely justified the annexation. Strangely enough, before the end of two centuries a Welsh Tudor mounted the English throne, to be followed also at no long interval by a Scottish Stuart.

Philip III. died in 1285. It is probable that Edward's visit to Gascony in 1286, though ostensibly connected with the arbitration to which he had been invited between the King of Aragon and the French princes, was not made without an eye to the danger impending over Aquitaine by the accession of Philip III.'s son, Philip the Fair. His character must have been well known to Edward. At any rate, as already observed, the three years now spent in Aquitaine 1286–
were of the greatest importance to its future, since the ties 1289.
between king and people were multiplied and strengthened, while local energy and self-government were fostered on every side. The affairs of Scotland soon gave Philip his opportunity, and justified the Gascon policy of Edward.

We have traced the earlier and more obscure outlines of the complicated relations which had existed for centuries between England and Scotland. It was scarcely necessary to dwell on the better known vicissitudes and family alliances of Edward's Plantagenet predecessors; but it is only in the light of that historical retrospect that we can expect to form a correct judgment between the two views which are presented to us from either side of the Border. Edward and his subtle lawyers were indeed themselves misled to some extent by the absence of a more complete historical knowledge such as

we now possess; but they were acting on the feudal ideas of the age in claiming the suzerainty which, when thirteen competitors for the Scottish crown appeared, was acknowledged by all of them to be his right. It was in the mode of exercising this suzerainty that he differed with the Scottish people, who by no means recognised the position thus granted. He meant it to be a real office, modelled on the usual feudal relations, such as existed between himself and the King of France with respect to Aquitaine. Thus appeals from subjects were to be received, as he and his ancestors had found to their cost abroad. If the king whom he had selected resisted the suzerain's award, he must forfeit his kingdom. If, when it had been taken possession of by the suzerain, the barons broke the oath of fealty which they had taken, they exposed themselves to be treated as enemies.

All this followed; and no one of the steps which Edward took but was justifiable under the feudal law, which he held to be applicable; but it is equally certain that the Scots considered themselves deceived and trampled upon. In fact, under cover of an overstrained legalism, he hurried on too fast, believing it to be now in his power to put a stop to the troubles of centuries, and to the danger impending over Aquitaine by the prolonged occupation of his troops in the north. Even if he had been perfectly right, it was not generous to take advantage of the weakness of the Scots; nor had the conquest been prepared, as in Wales, by a gradual incorporation of any portions of the kingdom, though they had once been English, nor by any continuous or visible assertion of sovereign claims. Hence the resistance became national and passionate. Hence reprisals took a most barbarous form; while rebellions followed quick upon conquests.

1305. When the patriotic Wallace suffered the death which was held by the English, in strict feudal law, to be his due, the old king was too much worn out to deal with the still more arduous task of subduing the half-English Bruce, who, although himself stained with murder and treachery, soon avenged the wrongs of the Scots at Bannockburn.

It is but fair in any retrospect, however short, to set against the error in judgment which Edward thus committed the violent provocations he received, and the numberless acts of clemency which accompanied his war-policy; nor ought we

for a moment to be led away by the false parallel which has been drawn between his conduct to Scotland and Philip the Fair's conduct towards him. In the former there is no taint of dishonour; in the latter no one has ventured to defend the theft of the Gascon castles by Philip when deposited with him in pledge,—a measure taken in pursuance of the designs upon Aquitaine he had long harboured, and in revenge for the victory of the Cinque Ports fleet at St Mahé. 1293.
It was the real cause of the exasperation which the two countries began to evince towards one another; but it had the effect of bringing out the Gascon loyalty to England, and soon rallied the English also round their great king. There is something painful to Englishmen in contemplating the death of such a man at the moment when he seemed about to round off the well-laid purpose of his life, full of earnest belief in the justice of his cause, and surely not unaware that it would be imperilled under the son whom he had failed to train up as he desired. But who can help observing how much better it was that Scotland should escape subjection at that time, and be prepared by the events of four more centuries to become one people with her greater neighbour? Who can measure the effect of that interval on its self-respect, its inheritance of valour, its contributions of every kind to the common stock?

Perhaps in no other way did Edward's later difficulties betray themselves more clearly than in the insufficiency of his punishment of Philip the Fair. The Peace of 1303 could not in the nature of things be considered satisfactory, though the king may have convinced himself that the intermarriages between the two royal families formed the best guarantee of peace which was available. For even this remarkable man, with his far-reaching designs and his strong will, had to learn that he was only a link in a long chain of causes and effects. With indomitable Scotland on his northern border, and Aquitaine in the power of the treacherous Philip across the Channel, the people of England were the real masters of the situation, rather than himself; and they were well aware of it. The crown had been saved from political extinction with their goodwill; they now demanded their price. Nothing but the guarantee of self-taxation could save the rights of the people; and the rights of all parties—king

and Pope, barons and clergy, knights and citizens—having been strained and tested to the uttermost during this eventful century, the resultant of all the forces in the body politic issued at last in the joint government of the realm by the king and the three Estates of the realm, which has continued to our own day.

The efforts of Edward to extricate himself from the control of the Estates must not be set down to tyrannical proclivities. As in other cases of resistance to change which occur in the history of England, those who have been responsible for government in arduous times find the difficulty of intrusting it to unknown and inexperienced agents almost, often quite, insurmountable. Edward I., however, had learnt to give way to circumstances by a long course of political training, in which he had taken a midway position, one of sympathy with all sides within certain limits. Thus he was not for the first time in contact with the question of joint action which had to be settled for all future time; and hence the permanence of that parliamentary settlement.

The ecclesiastical difficulties of the reign would evidently have been much greater than they were had not the preposterous supremacy of the Papacy over Christian States, established by Innocent III., come to an ignominious end. The English people had suffered enough, and were convinced that they must assert their independence. Edward commenced the further process of reducing the equally preposterous position of the English clergy within some bounds
1279. by his famous Statute of Mortmain. On this foundation others were to build. At the same time, he removed all just grounds for complaint by granting to the clergy the power of self-taxation as a compensation for the summary settlement of the question of their allegiance which has been already noticed. All these matters are capable of being placed in an unfavourable light according to the national, political, or ecclesiastical instincts of different writers. But the reign is now better understood, and even the conduct of
1290. Edward in expelling the Jews has found able defenders.

The reign of Edward II. is best taken—at any rate for these outlines—as a temporary disturbance of the harmonious government set up by his father. It is the only reign in English history in which the experiment was tried of

governing the country through the medium of mere personal favourites quite unfit for the task, and insisting on the experiment in defiance of the goodwill of all classes of the people. Neither John, nor Henry III., nor Richard II. neglected in such a manner the first principles of common prudence; yet if we examine the reign with care we shall find that the young king's error lay less in a designed tyranny than in simple blindness and obstinacy, the foundation of which had been laid in habitual disobedience to his father.

A motherless son, with a father immersed in public affairs, was the victim of those placed around him, and in Piers Gaveston he found one whose fascinations of every kind it would have required a strong mind to resist. It was not so easy for a prince brought up very much amongst the Gascons to divest himself of their influence. They fully shared the civilisation which in those ages flourished in proportion to the proximity of the Mediterranean. Cultivated, witty, handsome, and accomplished in arms, Gaveston was precisely the man to dominate a youth nurtured in the purple, and trusted by his father to fill important offices before he was fit for them. The contempt for authority which both of them showed in the lifetime of the great king led naturally to the sarcastic mockery of the English nobles after his death; and the proud English nature became saturated with an inextinguishable hate which nothing but the blood of the offenders could satisfy. Edward, on the other hand, never forgot the foul murder of a friend whom he loved as his life: his misplaced affection, as well as his personal habits, had taught him to lean upon a favourite; and when he was removed they had rendered him unable to stand alone without a prop of a similar, though of a much better, kind. So he fell into the abyss which yawned for him.

It is right to refer the miserable fate of Edward II. to its true cause, the impossibility that a people, left by Edward I. in the state which has just been described, should put up with such an unworthy successor; but it is by no means necessary to believe in the unmitigated blackness with which it has been found convenient to colour his character. Much of what we hear has come from his enemies, and is not easy to fit in with a certain refinement and literary taste, such as

he evinced in his patronage of the Universities. It is strange that he should be the first to establish King's scholarships at these institutions; and the foundation of Oriel cannot be
1326. attributed solely to Adam de Brome. His treatment of Gascon families shows, when examined, a sense of justice and honour. Again, we must remember that his chief political opponent, Thomas, Earl of Lancaster, was certainly no better but rather a worse man than Edward, and was powerful enough to make government impossible. The control over the king exercised by a small oligarchy of "Lords Ordainers" may have been necessary, but it was only a tyranny of much the same kind as his own. It was said that the quarrels with his queen arose out of his intimacy with Gaveston, but the later conduct of the fair and false Isabella leaves it open to suspicion that the fault was not entirely on the king's side. Nor was he fortunate in the Primate of his reign. Winchelsea's successor was Reynolds, a man of poor character, who had been Prince Edward's tutor.

The story is not at all unlike a Greek tragedy. Even the elements helped to avenge the breach of the Fifth Commandment. Never was England in greater distress than in 1315, 1316, and 1321, when the continued rains and failure of crops produced general suffering and ill-humour. Nor in reckoning up the causes of his fall may we omit to count
1314. the loss of the Battle of Bannockburn rather as a misfortune than the fault of the king. It was not the backwardness of his troops, but their faulty disposition in the face of a master in the art of war, which gave Bruce the victory. Edward did not fly till the day was hopelessly lost. When in command under his father a contemporary author described him as "handsome, courteous, and intelligent." He was not wanting in courage. But the avenging Furies pursued their prey. The murder of the mocking Gaveston led to the execution of Lancaster, and that to the shocking murder of the king, and the long tragedy of the Wars of the Roses. The House of Lancaster carried its feuds into the family of Edward III., and they burst into flame in the succeeding reigns. That the catastrophe of the unhappy king assumed such peculiar horrors, appears to have been very much the work of party hatreds. While Lancaster's party professed that miracles were wrought at the tomb of their leader, the

offerings made at Edward's tomb in Gloucester Abbey were rich and numerous enough to rebuild in the new Perpendicular style a large portion of the fabric. This could hardly have been the case with a mere reprobate. He was far from friendless.

A few words will describe the relations of France and of Ireland to England at this time. The peace with the former was a mere truce, and the death of Edward's father-in-law broke up the semi-pacific condition of affairs. Hostilities did not however commence till the death of Philip V. in 1322. His successor, Charles IV., renewed the older policy of his father, and on the merest pretexts invaded the English provinces. Being in no condition to resist, Edward tried one expedient after another to pacify his brother-in-law, who was illustrating with remarkable exactness the fable of the wolf and the lamb. The visit of Queen Isabella and her young son to the French Court was a repetition of that made under similar circumstances by Edmund Crouchback on the part of Edward I., and had much the same result. Here, under French auspices, was hatched the conspiracy with Mortimer and the marriage of young Edward with Philippa 1328.
of Hainault, which however turned out much to the disappointment of the conspirators. Full of sanguine expectation of success in these intrigues, the kings of France and Scotland made a close alliance, and a few months, it was hoped, would put the army of the overlord in possession of the coveted territory of his wretched vassal. In the meantime the great lords of the French side of the Pyrenees were encouraged to harass the Gascon loyalists; and when Charles died, in 1328, the new king, Philip VI., of the House of Valois, carried further and further the policy of the old House. This was the inheritance to which Edward III. succeeded, as a mere lad, in 1327. The French were in full alliance with all the enemies of England.

The invasion of Ireland by the Bruces, and their expulsion 1315.
soon afterwards by the English troops, form the commencement of Irish History in any large sense noticeable in these outlines. The organisation of Henry II.'s conquest by John had remained, under the troubles of the thirteenth century, little more than the skeleton of a system; nor was it easy to make it anything else when the only real government in the

island was confined to the English pale. The Anglo-Irish lords of the land were interested in retaining the old elements of faction and disorder which had opened the way for conquest, and which made a Scottish raid temporarily successful. The "Deputy" of the Lord of Ireland was however generally an experienced officer, and John, Lord Bermingham, once more restored the order, if so it can be called, which had been interrupted. We may well suppose that if Edward I. had not been engaged with France and Scotland he would have made Ireland a very different country from what it had become during the Middle Ages. A "Statute of Ireland," corresponding to his famous and successful "Statute of Wales," might have knit its discordant portions into an incorporate framework, and the native courage, talent, and amiability might have found their legitimate development under English rule no less than amongst the Gascons, a people who had much in common with the Irish. It was left to Edward III. to take such measures as were then possible after a fatal delay of centuries. The Scottish raid had not only proved that Ireland could not safely be left alone: it left behind it a distinct mark of waste and lawlessness.

Hence in connection with the marriage of Edward's son, Lionel, Duke of Clarence, into the great Anglo-Irish family
1366. of De Burgh a serious attempt at settlement was made under his auspices as Deputy. Out of this marriage sprang the relations between Ireland and the Yorkist House in the next century; and the difficulties experienced in consequence by the Lancastrian Tudors led to their effective organisation of the island. But it now required reconquest. That was at last completed by Elizabeth. The disorders and factions of Ireland have extended themselves to its history. The extreme difficulty of finding a severe impartiality in dealing with its troubled past is well known. For the period now in hand, Hallam's 'Constitutional History' and Longman's 'Edward III.' are the best books.

The special contributions of Edward II.'s reign to ecclesiastical history are, though less striking than in other reigns, full of significance. As the reluctant tool of his father-in-law, the king broke up the Knights Templars, whose time, whatever the measure of their actual guilt, had indeed fully come, and thus commenced the policy of seizing such ecclesiastical

revenues as were no longer required for the good of the nation. Edward III. and the Lancastrian House followed up that policy in the case of the Alien Priories, and the Tudors completed it. Edward's Gascon dominions had the honour or dishonour of supplying Pope Clement V. to the French-Papal Succession at Avignon; and his own dethronement illustrated the leading part taken by ecclesiastics in politics. Bishops Orleton and Stratford were as much concerned in it as Archbishop Arundel in that of Richard II., and Bishop Morton in that of Richard III. These great political officials had not yet found the place for which an Apostolical Ministry was designed.

CHAPTER III.

EDWARD III.

THIS great reign must, as we have said, be taken in close connection with its two predecessors. Is it too much to take for granted that we may be excused from dwelling any further upon the righteousness of the war with France, which now became continuous? It has only been disputed in modern times, and apparently because on the one hand all war is supposed to be iniquitous, and on the other because it is thought unwise to wound the susceptibilities of those who have long been friends and often allies. But it is a poor way of paying a compliment to those who finally expelled the English from their shores, to minimise the prowess of their enemies, and to represent the resolute defence of their own possessions by the English as a barbarous error which requires apology. If the mere drum-and-trumpet histories are unsatisfactory, what shall we say to those who insist on playing pastoral airs all through the din of battle? Is all this very far removed from "the craven fear of being great"?

Let us carry a little further the defence of the old English people with respect to the wars at which we have now arrived. The assumption by Edward III. in 1337 of the

title of King of France was by no means the simple absurdity which superficial writers maintain. The claim was lodged at the death of Charles IV., and was held to be valid not only by English, but by many French, jurists. Not only was it justifiable on tenable grounds, but undeniably politic under the circumstances. It had more to do with the difference between the success of Edward I. and that of Edward III. than is sometimes supposed; but the brilliant triumphs of the latter were really due, in the first place, to the growth of the national and anti-French sentiment which had taken place amongst the English people during the interregnum, as it might almost be called, of Edward II. This change began to show itself in the disgust inspired by Queen Isabella's crimes. The erring son of "Edward the Good" had been hounded to a shocking death by the "she-wolf of France." The nation supported with enthusiasm the youthful avenger of his father's wrongs, and cheered him on to the Scottish wars in which he was to take his first lessons in military art. During these obscure but arduous campaigns the people learnt that at all costs the French, who supported the Scots, must be resisted; and they discovered that a hero fit to head the resistance had appeared in the person of the great Edward's grandson. The tacit compact now formed between king and people was never broken. Hence, though Edward, like his grandfather, had often to resort to arbitrary measures, and, like him, sometimes to withdraw when he had gone too far, he was able to carry his people with him almost to the close of his long reign. By that time the loss of
1372. Aquitaine, which was due to the mistaken policy of the Black Prince, brought ruin on his House.

Let us here note one special ingredient in the success of Edward III. not sufficiently observed. The vast sums required for the pay and transport of troops, and for equestrian establishments, as well as to support the magnificence necessary to the leadership of the world of chivalry at its central home in the new and grand palace of Windsor, were chiefly supplied from the recently developed industry of the people in sheep-farming. Such industry could not exist when the Government was occupied with civil war, or in an unsettled state. Henry III.'s reign, though far from undisturbed, was on the whole peaceful and prosperous, and Edward I.'s Statutes en-

forced an orderly government in every part of the land, which even his son's incapacity scarcely suspended. Thus shepherds were able to graze vast flocks upon the Downs without fear of their seizure by robber-barons, or the humbler sort of highwaymen. No other country was in this settled condition, and so England enjoyed an absolute monopoly of the trade in wool. It fetched enormous prices; the Flemish looms manufactured it into cloth for all Europe; and Edward III.'s institution of Staple towns conferred on the Crown the power of becoming the chief gainer by the trade, often its monopolist. Many a noble house was built up on this trade, even down to Tudor times. Thus English arms rose to the first place in Europe through trade, not then thought to be degrading. So also, when the Continent lay crouching under the heel of Napoleon, it was the irrepressible demand for English trade which at last stirred the feeble pulses of the conquered nations to action, and once more led Great Britain to the leadership of the world.

Whether these things were desirable or not must depend on individual judgment; but if they were, the debt due to Edward III. for his patriotism, sagacity, and industry in enlarging the commerce and wealth of his people cannot be denied. He was far from being an Edward I.,—such kings appear but once or twice in a millennium; but in the glory which he, his family, and his troops acquired at Sluys, Crécy, Neville's Cross, Calais, Poitiers, Najara, and at the battle of Lespagnols sur Mer, made famous by Froissart, he left not only an inheritance which has nerved the English arm in every subsequent age, but which did at that very time change for the better the face of England and not a few of her institutions. Such an inheritance was far from being dearly bought by blood, treasure, and agony of many sorts. The king who, with his sons, was on a level with the head of the Holy Roman Empire, and far above him in reputation, and at whose Court attended three captive or suppliant kings, so far raised his people that they relinquished with contempt the language of their Norman-French conquerors, and rose at once into the English verse of Chaucer and the prose of Wiclif. The uprising against the corruptions of the medieval system of the Church now dared to show itself in the forefront of Parliament; and the Sovereignty of the Sea was once

more placed beyond dispute by the "Avenger of Merchants." A moment's thought will convince any one of the unfairness involved in mixing up the mistakes and failures of the king's declining years, the decay in the concluding part of his reign of a hero who had been prematurely worn out by his immense exertions in the public cause, with the splendid youth and manhood of the far larger part in which he ran his great career.

Equally unfair it is, if we acknowledge the obligations under which English kings lay, to brand Edward with the charges of folly, selfishness, or ambition; and even the extravagance and ostentation for which he might be thought blamable appear differently when considered in relation to the chivalry of his day, and the purpose it answered. If England was to be raised out of the prostrate condition in which Edward II. left her, her Gascon provinces to be retained, and Scotland to be prevented from conquering England by the help of France and the scarcely settled Welsh, vast efforts were absolutely necessary in order to raise the standard of valour and self-sacrifice in war above the level to which it had fallen. Emulation, glory, honour, love, and even religious devotion — though the moribund medievalism of the times was ill fitted to supply wholesome nutrition—must be called into conspicuous, wide-spreading activity. The Round Table, the Garter, the tournament, the pomp of heraldry, the charm of minstrelsy, the munificence, the courtesy, the display, which went to compose the form and illustrate the idea of chivalry, must be elaborated and systematically encouraged. If to effect this result some ostentation and extravagance were involved, who would grudge it? These things cannot be measured by the yard or the pound's weight. As already said, chivalry should be regarded as a transitional stage of development out of medieval barbaric force into modern Christian freedom and enlightened sympathy. Froissart must not be judged by the standards of to-day, but used for this reign with loving gratitude.

All these long English reigns require to be broken up in order that we may perceive the drift and bearing of their several parts. Let us call the first ten years (1327-1337) the Training; the next twenty-three years (1337-1360) the

Struggle; the last seventeen years (1360-1377) the Result —a mixed result of glory and defeat.

The first need not detain us. The early part is still obscure. How far the boy was to be blamed for siding with his mother and her paramour in the destruction of his father we have little means of judging. It would be scarcely conceivable in an Edward I., even at the age of fifteen; but his home had been of a very different kind. That, still so young, Edward III. fearlessly held his course, when his mother's crimes became apparent, to her imprisonment and the execution of Mortimer, may be attributed, in part at any rate, to the support of an excellent wife, to whom he was faithful through the whole of their married life. In that he resembled his grandfather. What a strange beginning of a reign this rise upon the ruin of both parents! The Scottish wars formed the best of schools,—a brave enemy, an almost inaccessible country, the difficulty of procuring supplies, and yet a success which rewarded courage and perseverance. It was an apprenticeship of the sternest kind in the art of war.

The second period — the Struggle — is itself divided into four parts, distinguished by the different methods adopted for the attack on France. The first, like his grandfather's campaign, but with more prospect of success, was by way of Flanders, and in connection with Van Artevelt and the customers of the English merchants. This involved a system of alliances and wasteful expense, accompanied by useless pomp and local jealousies, which Edward was already too good a soldier and too ill-supplied with funds to incur again. The one military success of this period was obtained on the discovery that nothing could be done against France until the old Sovereignty of the Sea was assured once more. The burning of Portsmouth and attack on Southampton in 1338 had been a rude rejoinder to the assumption of the title of "King of France." By this time Edward had aroused the spirit of his people, and was not afraid to meet his Parliament. He plainly told them that it was hopeless to deal with the emergency in the old way; that he must have ships and seamen enough to sweep the seas. "There was navy enough in England if the people only had goodwill." The response was hearty enough to give him a fine fleet, which he and his admirals handled consummately at Sluys, and 1340.

nobly led to a victory which is said to have cost the French 30,000 men. This was on a similar scale in point of magnitude with the subsequent great land battles, and like them was won by a judicious employment of English archers, well supported by heavy armed troops; but it must be carefully distinguished from them as an engagement in which the nautical aptitude of English seamen, and especially of the Cinque Ports mariners, who composed half the fleet, came to the front, and linked the naval history of the fourteenth century with that of the thirteenth. The first period ends with the king's resolute attack on the official administration of his realm, by which no doubt part of the supplies granted by Parliament was intercepted, and on the abuses traced to the sheriffs. A lay Chancellor took the place of Bishop Stratford.

The second attempt on France was made by way of Brittany in 1342, in connection with the dynastic quarrels of the ducal house, and under the advice of the Comte d'Artois. It led to nothing. The third was of a very different kind. By the advice of the Comte d'Harcourt, Edward, now accompanied by the Black Prince, a boy of fifteen, instead of going to the assistance of Henry, Earl of Derby, who had already recovered the chief part of Aquitaine, made a sudden and unexpected descent, in 1346, on Normandy. This campaign is familiar to all,—the contest of strategy between the two kings for the passage of the Seine, the battle of Crécy, and the capture of Calais, which is supposed to have been the real object of the English. This strong fortress had hitherto been to France what Dover had been to England—a fortified harbour for her ships, and a constant thorn in the English side. No trouble, no expense, was spared to master it. A fleet of 710 ships, manned chiefly from the ports in the south of England, blockaded the sea-approaches and covered the siege, while the army
1347. was protected by strong outworks. At last it fell. Henceforward Calais was to take for two centuries a leading part in English history, sharing with the Cinque Ports the command of the Channel, and affording a foothold in France which was some slight compensation for the loss of Normandy.

By the mediation of the Pope a truce was now effected, and as the victory of Neville's Cross had placed King David

Bruce of Scotland in Edward's hands, this was the time when the king and his court gave themselves up to chivalrous festivities. Nor could they be blamed. The war was believed to be at an end, and the costly equestrian establishments, which had hitherto enabled the king to put fine bodies of cavalry in the field, were broken up in order to find money for building Windsor Castle. Chivalry must have its appropriate and convenient home. Wealth, derived both from peace and war, circulated through the land—for it was the heyday of commerce, which grew rapidly under the king's encouragement and the recently secured safety of the seas; but the note of warning was sounded by the dreadful pestilence of the Black Death, to which has been attributed 1349.
no small influence in changing the social, and even religious, life of England.

The accession of the martial and chivalrous John in 1350 to the throne of France was perhaps the main cause of the renewal of the war. Edward's victories might fairly entitle him to some permanent and solid advantage, and after the experience of vassalage for Aquitaine which he and his ancestors had felt, it was reasonable that he should press for relief from the overlordship of France. Of this the new French king, full of hope and confidence, would not hear; and before long the renewed war took the form of a direct struggle for the English provinces. The Gascons themselves eagerly took part on the English side, and mustered in force both in the Black Prince's raid upon Narbonne, and afterwards in the similar raid upon the central provinces which issued in the battle of Poitiers. But not even did that victory nor the captivity of their king abate the courageous resolution of the French to keep their overlordship. Crushed and ruined at last by Edward's final expedition of 1359, they gave way; and the English obtained their object at the Peace of Bretigny in 1360.

Thus terminated the struggle, at least for the present. The contest which the descendants of Henry II. each waged in turn for the defence of his inheritance, the alliances they had made for that purpose, and the vast number of national interests involved, justified their employment of the whole strength of their people whenever they might find them able and willing to co-operate. Every military consideration de-

manded that such sacrifices should be recompensed in such a way as to prevent their constant recurrence. Events were soon to show that it was easier for the English to win the overlordship of Aquitaine than to hold the province.

The immediate result was soon visible in the stately court kept at Bordeaux by the Black Prince and his celebrated bride, Joan, Countess of Kent. The reorganisation of the provinces was wisely placed in the hands of Gascons, long trained both at the Court of Windsor and in Aquitaine; but the contrast between the Prince of Aquitaine and Edward I., who had occupied much the same position in an earlier generation, tells very much in favour of that great king's statesmanship. Peter the Cruel may have suffered at the hands of the chroniclers; but Edward I. would have subordinated the chivalrous impulse to assist even a virtuous ally, to the common-sense consideration that neither he nor his Gascon subjects could afford to wage an expensive war in his favour. Perhaps he might even have found some method of discountenancing the marriage of a chief vassal, like the Sieur D'Albret, into the Royal Family of France, without turning him into a deadly enemy. In short, the Black Prince, though for his many noble qualities the prime favourite of the English people, was a typical knight and general of that age, but nothing more. He was standing on a volcano without being aware of it, and when it burst into flame the fruit of so many victories was lost almost in a moment. Neither he nor his father, suffering the one from mortal disease and the other from old age, were capable of stemming the tide of disaster, and the resources of England had been used up. But their errors and misfortunes by no means absolve the new king of France, Charles the Wise, from the charge of dishonourable dealing with the leading clause of the Treaty of Bretigny by which his overlordship had been renounced. To keep back the actual renunciation till an opportunity occurred of repudiating it, was not a much more creditable act than that of Philip the Fair in retaining the castles of Gascony after they had been redeemed from pledge. The general rising of the English provincials against their Prince's taxation, assisted by the forces of the French king, came to a head in 1372 by the defeat of the youthful Earl of Pembroke's fleet at the hands of the very Castilians

in whose affairs the Prince had intervened. It was irreparable, and nothing was left of the provinces which came with Henry II. but Bordeaux and Bayonne.

In considering what we have called the third period of the reign, we shall find the same characteristics throughout, —a change in the social and political life of the English people, produced by the effects of the prolonged war; but those effects were not perceived so plainly till after the revolt of Aquitaine. The pride which sprang from a series of magnificent victories, and the achievement of a long-desired end, had brought in its train the usual consequence of luxury and arrogance. A far less wholesome spirit began to prevail than the self-sacrifice and devoted courage which had illuminated the field of battle with the light of chivalry. The country was enriched without a corresponding readjustment of classes such as might have digested and assimilated the accession of wealth. The national rising against a hostile and offensive Papacy was accompanied with wild theories of Communism, prevalent in all ages when wealth and station forget their responsibilities. Lay statesmen had scarcely yet received the necessary training for official life, and when tried, as they were in this reign, were thought inferior to the ecclesiastics, of whom however the people were tired. The king's Navy had been enlarged beyond his means of supporting it, and the Cinque Ports had suffered irrecoverably in the struggle which had so often called them to the front. Quarrels with the Flemings were added to the loss of Gascon customers. The springs of commerce, lately so abundant, began to dry up with alarming rapidity, and this made the system of impressment and embargo, by which fleets had been formed, quite intolerable. Thus everything seemed, during the last years of the reign, to fall to ruin.

All this had, however, its good side. It led the country to take a decided step in national self-government by the formation of two distinct political parties. In other words, the Parliament which had now been in full operation for nearly a century, and which had already come to sit in two separate Houses, found out how to govern the country by means of an orderly method of majorities, an Opposition ready to take the place of the Government if the latter were beaten. It is true that the methods were undefined and irregular: as a

system it might be called premature, for parliamentary power was still in its infancy; but it was never forgotten, though generally working rather underground than on the surface of politics. The two parties were led at this time by John of Gaunt and William of Wykeham respectively. The principles of the latter may be summed up under the formula—reform of abuses, political, military, and social, under the continued government of ecclesiastical officials, and in full harmony with the existing Church system, including of course the Papacy. This ecclesiastical party was supported by the Black Prince; it was the party which protected his wife and child. John of Gaunt's party gathered up within itself all the elements of discontent with ecclesiastical government which had been acquiring strength for many years, not only amongst the upper classes of the laity who felt deeply their exclusion from offices which they believed they could well fill, but also among the mass of the people, who had been roused by Wiclif and his friends to protest against the abuses of the clerical body.

The latter party gained the first success in 1371, when Wykeham was dismissed from his Chancellorship. The alliance between John of Gaunt and Wiclif was founded on a common patriotism, and cemented by a common perception of ecclesiastical abuses, Papal tyranny, and the evils of French influence. It was even strong enough to carry the weight of a dangerous ally like Alice Perrers, who knew so well how to use her opportunities. But the "Good Parliament" of 1376, when Gaunt's unfortunate administration was leading the country into fresh dangers, found itself strong enough to turn the scale. By a coalition of the Black Prince, of the bishops headed by Wykeham, and the mass of the baronage, it reigned supreme for a year, and the scene in St Paul's at the trial of Wiclif proclaimed the humiliation of their chief opponent. The death of the aged king in 1377 once more brought Gaunt to the front, but in a far less commanding position, and launched the youthful Richard on a stormy career, which we shall understand better after these remarks. We seem to be leaving the Middle Ages behind us when we find a House of Commons headed by a "Speaker," lay officials at the head of the Chancery, King's Bench, and Treasury, and Edward I.'s Conservators of the Peace turned

into the "justices" or magistrates, whose regular and systematic services could no longer, after the disorders of Edward II.'s reign, be dispensed with day by day and week by week. But these things did not affect the course of events nearly so much as the pre-Reformation affected it, and its high priest must have a chapter to himself.

CHAPTER IV.

JOHN WICLIF.

JOHN WICLIF, of the old knightly family bearing that name on the northern border of Yorkshire, finds no improper place by the side of kings. It may at least be said that he is the man who has left a broader mark on England and on Europe generally than any single man in the Middle Ages. Others have dominated the intellect of an age, or built up a wide-spreading system of government. Their work has long crumbled into dust; but Wiclif's services to the human race can only be compared to an abounding river, receiving in its ever-broadening course the minor streams, but yet retaining from beginning to end the original impulse and direction. As the contemporary of Chaucer, the Black Prince, and Wykeham, he owed much, no doubt, to the elevation of the age in which his lot was cast,—an age superior to the twelfth century, if fruit is to be preferred to blossom; but it is as the inheritor of all previous ages that he stands before us unequalled and sublime. His history, like those of Dunstan, Anselm, Becket, Edward I., and Edward III., has gone through many phases;[1] and it may be here observed that the knowledge of the manner in which a great character has been treated by historians goes far towards a knowledge of English history itself. It is only in quite recent years that a truly learned and independent inquiry has been made into the subject; and even now the literary world is waiting for

[1] For this and subsequent notices of the Reformer, see 'Wiclif's Place in History' (Isbister).

the completion of the publication of his numerous works, which has been undertaken by the Wiclif Society. Then only shall we understand the full bearing of his doctrines upon one another, and put an end to the controversies which have circled round his name.

But we already know enough about Wiclif's earlier life and more important writings to be able to measure the growth of his opinions, and connect them with the surrounding circumstances. It is best to divide his career into three parts—(1) The University preparation; (2) the political preparation; and (3) the work itself. This work in its complete form was compressed into the last six years of his eventful life.

Under the first head we are to rank his Oxford life at either Balliol or Merton, crowned by his mastership of the former College and wardenship of Canterbury Hall. At that University, during a long residence, he became *facile princeps* as a lecturer, preacher, and philosophical writer, and as much its representative in his day as Grosseteste, Roger Bacon, Duns Scotus, Ockham, Bradwardine, or Armachanus had been in theirs. As the "Doctor Evangelicus" he was the last of the medieval giants of literature—that old literature which had done its work. He was also the bridge between the old and new—the last doctor who, being formed under the old system at its most complete development, had it in his power to construct the new; and, still further, possessed the energy and genius required for launching it on its beneficent course. Having based his system on the Bible, he made it the business of his later life to translate that Bible for the benefit of his countrymen.

Wiclif was of mature age when, in or about 1366, he commenced his second or political period. Starting with an absolute conviction that the principle of individual responsibility, which had been the key-stone of all his teaching, would solve all problems, he began to find himself in direct contact with the various medieval fabrics which had been erected on the opposite principle, that which we now call "Ultra-sacerdotalism." Above all such fabrics towered the Papacy, long fallen from its high estate, yet, under a sense of despair, making renewed attempts to strengthen its hold upon England. The Papal party were not a little guided in this policy by the supposition that the reverses now falling

thick upon England would aid their efforts—an opinion by no means confined to this particular occasion; but they had not reckoned on the employment by the government of a national champion against the Papacy, who was destined to give it the deepest wound it had yet received. At the king's court, in connection with Parliament, and as a Royal Commissioner at Bruges, Wiclif's Oxford ideas ripened and expanded to European dimensions, and his half-formed schemes began to settle themselves into consistent shape. As the political distress of the country developed itself after the loss of Aquitaine, so the people, filled with a sense of disappointment and helplessness, who constantly heard him preach in London, and Parliament-men, who acquired the habit of consulting him, learnt to rally round the one man who seemed able to inspire confidence.

It was now that he planned and prepared his famous institution of "Poor Priests," and set to work at the translation of the Bible into English. Withdrawing from London, he carried on his operations between Oxford, where he hired rooms in Queen's College, and Ludgarshall in Bucks, which he afterwards relinquished for Lutterworth. He was thus able to train many young Oxford men, not only as assistants in the great translation, but in work among the people. The two operations assisted each other. Carrying portions of the new Bible in their hands, the Poor Priests, friars of a new and superior kind, penetrated into several dioceses; and as they were at first not opposed, but rather patronised by the bishops, the work they did in planting the Wicliffian teaching was considerable. The persecution which soon followed had two effects. On the one hand, it deepened the hold of the new doctrines: on the other, it divided off the true Wicliffites from the Lollards, whose impatient spirit broke away from their master, and led them into extravagances.

The third period—the six years of intense and varied work to which all the rest had been leading up—opened with the commencement of the Papal Schism in 1378. Wiclif now denounced without reserve the corruptions of the Papacy, the Crusades preached by one Pope against the other, and their interminable devices for raising money. This brought him into conflict with the Pope's militia, the friars. Having some fundamental ideas in common with them, he had not

hitherto allowed himself to join those who had for many years been engaged in the exposure of the decline which had overtaken these confraternities. But circumstances had changed. Being the chief agents in the Papal Crusade, they now found themselves at war with one who gave them no quarter, and were glad enough to turn the hand of authority against the Poor Priests who were taking the very bread out of their mouths. The bishops, who had many reasons, political and ecclesiastical, for attempting to punish Wiclif, could not but listen to the complaints of the friars, especially when to what they called his "heresies" on less important points, he added his attack on the central doctrine of Transubstantiation. They had at their head the most resolute and able ecclesiastic of his day, Bishop Courtenay, who, on the murder of Archbishop Sudbury in 1381, became Primate.

This period is synchronous with the opening of the reign of Richard II. John of Gaunt was no longer able to make use of Wiclif as an ally, and could only indirectly protect him from the attacks which were now levelled against him in every direction. The five bulls of the Pope, transmitted to each of the authorities whose business it was to deal with the offender, were not to remain a dead letter. The bishops had failed to crush him at Lambeth—for the Council had no desire to embroil itself with the Londoners who rose in his defence—and the University of Oxford became the theatre of the struggle. There the friars were strong, but Wiclif was strong also, and he had on his side the moderate men who cared more for the independence of the University than for anything else. Here the intrepid Reformer chose his own ground, and in 1381 opened the last of his campaigns by posting on the gates of the Schools his famous twelve Theses on the Eucharist. This vehement attack on Transubstantiation naturally suggests comparison with Luther's similar act at Wittenberg a century and a half later; but it required a far greater amount of courage. The comparison between Wiclif and Cranmer as to the lateness of date at which both of them entered on this special controversy is also worth considering. Neither of them could divest himself of the dread that by denying the received explanations of the Eucharist he should encourage doctrines as extreme on one

side as the medieval gloss was on the other. Both, after a long suspense, came to the conclusion that they had no choice in the matter, and learnt to regard it as the chief spring of all the errors which had crept into the Church since Lanfranc introduced into England the doctrine of Paschasius Radbertus. The conduct of the medieval ecclesiastics towards Wiclif and of Queen Mary's advisers towards Cranmer in reference to this doctrine, sufficiently proved that they also considered it the key of the Papal system. This it is, then, which places Wiclif's act amongst the chief events of English History. "I may be silenced," said he, when the Chancellor peremptorily stopped his lecture, "but neither the Chancellor nor his colleagues can refute my propositions." Silenced he was at Oxford, silenced he had been in London; but that silence made itself felt throughout the world.

The first effect of this interdict was to rally the mass of the University to Wiclif's side; but he now appealed to the king. This was a measure as unexpected and irregular as the mission of the Poor Priests, for there was no right of appeal from the University in matters of this sort. It was deeply resented by the authorities—"like a heretic he was clinging to the secular power for the defence of his error and heresy." However, the case was important enough to bring John of Gaunt himself to Oxford. He had learnt the need of caution since the day when he stood by Wiclif's side in St Paul's, and when Lord Percy boisterously demanded that the accused should have a chair to sit upon, for he had much to answer. He was now dependent on the support of the ecclesiastics, and bluntly informed his old ally that he "must not say another word on the subject." Nothing more at that time could be done at Oxford, where, however, Wiclif's friends and followers made a gallant resistance to the party of the friars for more than a year. He determined to retire to Lutterworth, and from thence appeal to the nation. The zeal of his disciples almost emulated the multiplying processes of the modern press. Only a few days after the scene at Oxford he issued his celebrated "Confession," and very shortly after that his still more celebrated "Wicket," one for the learned, the other for the people. They were carried everywhere. It is impossible to exaggerate the literary activity which characterised these later days. He knew that his time

was short, and courted the paralysis which brought his life to a premature end.

In the midst of these labours occurred the insurrection of
1381. Wat Tyler. Wiclif's enemies of course have attempted to saddle him with some part of the blame of that terrible uprising, but they have entirely failed. The best proof is that Parliament, the last body to support a leveller, stood Wiclif's firm friend, and saved him from the final assault of the hierarchy, which was now delivered. Archbishop Courtenay, on the other hand, took up the matter with his accustomed vigour. He soon forced the University of Oxford to condemn, as well as silence, its foremost man. At the same time he summoned in London a Synod of Bishops and Divines, selected by himself, for the same purpose; and lastly he procured from the House of Lords, in which the ecclesiastics were dominant, and from the young king, a document, improperly called a "Statute," which would enable him to deal personally with the "heretics." He here calls himself the "Chief Inquisitor." Wiclif seemed once more driven into a corner from which there was no escape. The Synod, the famous "Earthquake
1382. Synod," condemned his alleged errors and heresies, but did not venture to condemn him personally. The policy of the bishops was to isolate him, to bring public opinion to bear against him by as many channels as possible, and then to seize him under the new Ordinance procured by the Primate. Thus they would force him to recant, or take the consequences. With his chief followers they were successful. The Inquisition in fact had commenced, but was not yet armed with full State power. Happily for the history of the world, some nineteen years were yet to elapse before the State became—to use Tyndal the martyr's phrase—the mere "hangman of the bishops." It used to be said that Wiclif himself recanted. He never did anything of the sort.

And now the final step was taken. The Convocation of Canterbury was summoned to meet at Oxford, and finish the business. But the ecclesiastics had miscalculated. Parliament met at Westminster the day after the meeting of Convocation. The House of Commons was thoroughly offended by the passing of the so-called "Clerical Statute" without its concurrence, and demanded that it should be expunged from the Rolls. It was expunged. Wiclif took advantage of the

turn of affairs, and now appealed to King and Parliament against his ecclesiastical judges, in a document called "The Complaint." This is one of the most memorable documents ever put forth during the whole course of English History, and, though not official, might well find a place in collections of documents bearing upon the Constitution. It marked an era, for it was a distinct restatement of the Royal Supremacy which had so long been overborne by the Papacy.

It might be said that the same thing had been already done in the earlier part of Edward III.'s reign, when the Statutes against Papal Provisors in 1350, and against pleading in the Bishop of Rome's Court in 1353, prepared the way for the more distinct reassertion of the Anglican Liberties which took place in the reign of Richard II. and at the Reformation. But this particular demand for liberty and justice was of a more precise kind; and it was even much more than that. It was a claim that the whole body of the Church, clergy and laity, might lawfully be called upon from time to time to readjust the relations of Church and State, and to bring the existing form of received doctrine to the one proper test of its foundation-charter, the Bible. The ecclesiastics had erected into an article of faith a really novel interpretation of a Divine Institution, the Lord's Supper or Eucharist: Wiclif demanded that it should not be left to their sole judgment, but to the Church of England by representation, clerical and lay. Not that he dreamt of calling upon them to formulate any new doctrine; he summoned them to protect the old. Parliament must for the moment have acknowledged the justice of the appeal, for Wiclif died in peace on the last day of the year 1384; but England had to wait for many years before the national will became strong enough to give permanent effect to what seems to us now self-evident. It should however never be forgotten that the leaven which Wiclif had inserted within the mass of English thought never ceased to ferment; and much of the liberty which we enjoy at the present day may be traced to him as the human source. The attempts which have been made in recent times to minimise the influence which he exerted on subsequent ages have not been very successful.

We have concentrated our attention chiefly on the great principles with which Wiclif's career was concerned. Their

assertion forms only a part of the debt due to this great man. The very document we have last mentioned contains his protest against the life-vows of the monastic Orders, and claims for the State the right to deal with Church temporalities if abused. He represented the growing national conviction that the enormous wealth of the ecclesiastical body had been ill-gotten and flagrantly misspent, and that the secularity which had come in like a flood upon the whole system should be purified in the light of the Bible and primitive times. It was not revolution but reformation that he supported with every faculty he possessed. These were the exact principles of the Reformation when it came at last. If we value that great settlement, we shall value the work of Wiclif. His honest vehemence and occasional overstatement, or even unintentional error, will count for nothing by the side of his gigantic work taken as a whole, and commended as it was by the blameless life which not even his enemies impugned.

CHAPTER V.

RICHARD II. (1378–1399).

We have advanced with Wiclif well into the reign of the hapless Richard. In the usual sketches of this time the distress and disasters which followed upon the death of Edward III. and the Black Prince are very inadequately brought out, and as the youthful king was not in the least responsible for them we are very apt to misunderstand certain points in his reign.

Charles le Sage, which the English interpreted to mean Charles the Crafty, had set himself to work from the moment of his accession to undermine the English position in Aquitaine; but there is no reason to think he would have succeeded if the Black Prince had not undertaken the expedition to Castile, with all its fatal consequences. Charles not only supported the appeal of the Gascons by word and deed, taking the precaution — wise under the

existing condition of France—that his officers should decline battle when the English armies marched through the land, but he discovered the merits of John de Vienne, and placed the whole organisation of the French Navy in his competent hands.

This was the first great admiral France had produced—the only officer of those times, except Edward III. himself, who clearly understood naval affairs. Under him the French Navy was carefully prepared during the final years of Edward III. for a united and deliberate attack upon the English shores, but the wary Charles insisted on its being kept in hand till all danger from the old king and his valiant son, both mortally sick, had passed away. Within a few days of Edward's death it appeared on the English shores. The Cinque Ports suffered first. Winchelsea, which had taken the lead for some time in the new and strongly fortified position provided by Edward I., was now ruined; but nearly all the sea-coast towns suffered in turn—for the English, engrossed in petty politics, were content with a mere futile defence, and the fleet, though collected from year to year, was never at the right place. It was not till the reign of Henry V. that the English Sovereignty of the Sea again became assured and indisputable.

The accession of Charles VI. in 1380 was marked by a still more determined plan of invasion. The youthful monarch and his admiral resolved to change these successful descents upon the English coasts for one vast armament, which, like the conquest of Norman William, should obliterate the independence of the islanders, and avenge the wrongs of generations. It was brought to nothing through the ill-conduct of Charles's uncles; and the waste of such immense funds crippled France for half a century. Yet the English were in no condition to take advantage of a collapse which offered them the same opportunity as they had themselves recently afforded to John de Vienne. It was not Richard's fault. He had hitherto advocated a war policy, but the Council were all-powerful. When he came of age he gradually leaned more and more towards peace, and after the death of the good Queen Anne, actually married the child Isabella of France, and in so doing gave no slight impulse to his impending fall.

Kings of England have, in fact, seldom prospered under a French alliance till quite modern times. Was this the result of simple insular ferocity? By no means. Never could the English forget that they had been expelled from their king's dominions, sometimes by fraud, sometimes by force; and parliamentary government taught them to regard the quarrel as their own. Further, the English invariably discovered that the French alliance brought with it un-English ideas of government and administration, which culminated in the reigns of the ignoble Stuart pensioners of Louis XIV. These French ideas came in with the Conqueror. The king's prerogative was supposed to render him independent of all questions of behaviour towards his subjects. He might dispense at his pleasure with charters and statutes, pardon those who broke them, or even altogether annul them. The nation must supply funds for public purposes; the crown revenues were his own. The English, on the other hand, continued to insist that no law could be changed without the assent of the nation expressed in Parliament; the king was accountable to his people, and was to be coerced or deposed if he deliberately broke the laws. Thus the redress of grievances was to precede supply, and the king must provide in ordinary circumstances for the defence of his realm. It was always a struggle to impress these constitutional ideas even on the best kings, nor was the victory won till the Revolution of 1688. Richard's reign is often treated as if he was exceptionally guilty.

Richard II. was a far superior man to many of the weaker kings of England; but being self-willed and unwarlike, he was unfitted for the work which the times required. Yet, on a closer inspection than the traditional view of the reign has generally encouraged, we cannot but observe that the finer qualities which came out in certain crises of his reign appear to have frequently influenced his conduct: we know that he was not an immoral man, that he was an excellent husband to an excellent wife, and that he had devoted friends, willing to lay down their lives for him when there was nothing whatever left for them to gain. Violent contrasts do not exist in nature or in human life. When we account for admitted historical facts by paradoxes, we may well suspect that we have not arrived at a true interpretation

of those facts. Let us again have recourse to our plan of looking at the reign in its distinct divisions. Though short, there are no less than four; and we are the more concerned to observe them carefully, since the faulty views of the reign which have obtained arise out of a gross confusion of the periods. They may be distinguished by the terms,—Boyhood, Revolution, Good Government, and Tyranny.

The first, from 1377 to 1386, may be described as a too prolonged tutelage, in which Richard, who had been brought up in the purple quite as much as Edward II., was kept under restraint by his uncles, and not being judiciously guided in the arts of government, fell, like his prototype, into the hands of favourites. His brilliant behaviour in the insurrection of 1381 indicated much more than mere possession of the Plantagenet courage and presence of mind. He showed a real sympathy with the villeins, who had undeniable grievances. He tried to prevent the revocation of the charters of manumission by which they had been quieted, but was overborne by the terrified landholders; yet he absolutely refused to adopt certain more violent restrictive measures. His instincts were undoubtedly for freedom and forgiveness, and there is no proof, nor even probability, that he intended to use the villeins against his enemies. His early and happy marriage with Anne of Bohemia ought, one might think, to have saved him from the vice of favouritism; but he was at least more fortunate than Edward II. in not being cast under the spell of a Gaveston.

When we consider the effect of such a galling government as that of his uncle Gloucester, and his cousin Derby, afterwards Henry IV., who seems to have been pushing Gloucester on from the first, we can hardly be surprised that he should require some friend to lean upon. The reign is in short, from one, and perhaps the truest, point of view, a long duel between the son of the Black Prince and the son of John of Gaunt. One or other of them must inevitably perish. A handsome and cultivated youth, who showed himself at fifteen every inch a king, who was married at sixteen, and led his own army to Scotland at eighteen, required a different treatment from that which he received. He was a man, and should have been dealt with as such. His lavish and reprehensible grants to his favourites were made the excuse for

Gloucester's violent interference in 1386, but there is good ground for believing that the movement was encouraged by the anti-Wicliffite party, which had taken alarm at the sympathy with the Reformers shown at this time by Richard and Anne.

Each of the four years of the second period—1386-1389 inclusive—was signalised by a revolution of its own, petty revolutions arising out of the mistakes made by both parties in the first period. The turbulent uncle and the self-willed king triumph alternately. In the first instance, Gloucester brings overpowering force to bear upon Richard, and completely dominating him and his friends, forces him to submit to be governed by fifteen Sovereign Commissioners, a simple oligarchy like the Lords Ordainers of Edward II.'s reign. In 1387, the king, cleverly appealing to the people in a progress through the country, and relying on the opinion of the judges, for a moment recovers his position by a sudden stroke for which Gloucester was unprepared. Again, in 1388, he is crushed to the dust by Gloucester at the head of the "Merciless Parliament"; his friends, after a short civil war, being judicially murdered. Finally, in 1389, he makes a sudden appearance in the Council, and, in the spirit of his ancestors, begs to be told how old he is;—in other words, he informs the Government, which has virtually deposed him, that he means to resume the Crown. Instantly, and as unexpectedly as when he lost it, he now recovers his position. At this very time John of Gaunt returns from Spain, sobered by misfortune and prematurely aged; he throws his weight into the king's scale, and Gloucester's turbulent career is at an end for many years to come.

Derby, the soul of the conspiracies, made the best of his defeat, but sternly nursed his revenge. Besides the hereditary feud already fostered in the House of Lancaster, he never forgot the inexpiable offence given by Richard in 1384, when he declared his heir to be Roger, Earl of March —the head, indeed, of Lionel's House, but in the female line. Whatever might be the analogy of this selection to the claim of descent made in England for the Crown of France, Henry Bolingbroke meant to maintain the English descent in the male line, though of a junior House, and he succeeded. Able, dark, resolute, Shakespeare justly puts into his mouth

the famous words: "Heaven knows, my son, by what by-paths and indirect crook'd ways I met this crown." Of those who shared Richard's counsels during the struggle, he was perhaps fortunate in losing Vere,—a bold young man who may have had higher qualities, but was too impatient to bide his time,—Suffolk, the head of the De la Poles, an able minister, but not the man to guide his king under the circumstances, and even Burley, for whom it is said that Queen Anne pleaded for three hours on her knees. The king would certainly have been fortunate if he had also lost in the struggle the Hollands, his two turbulent half-brothers, men of violent temper and reckless counsel, who stood by their mother's son to the last, but were none the less his evil geniuses. Even they had learnt a temporary lesson, for Richard now became a changed man.

Such an expression may surprise those who have been in the habit of judging the king by his early and his latest conduct. Even Hallam accepted the received view of Richard as a frivolous youth, who, savagely remembering his misfortunes, dissembled his hatreds, and, like some wild animal, crouched patiently till a tempting opportunity presented itself for a deadly spring upon his prey. But that seems most unreasonable when we reflect on the length of this third period, a period of good government, and how great the temptation must have been to mount on the wave of public opinion which had turned in his favour, and to resume his former "redeless" career. Could a frivolous dissembler have waited seven years? Could "youth at the prow and pleasure at the helm" have guided the ship of state through a course which is admitted to be unexceptionably good? The government of England for these years was much more than a mere reformed and constitutional government. It was, on its domestic side, one of the highest order, wise, far-reaching, laborious; it dealt with the most wasting chronic diseases of the body politic.

Nor can the merit of this government be set down by any means entirely to the credit of the veteran Wykeham. No doubt we can attribute the good beginning which Richard made to the influence of one who was the old and tried friend of his family, but the worn-out statesman soon retired to his diocese, and yet there was no pause or break in the

better order of affairs. Parliament had its full weight. There is no attempt to bring back the French methods of despotism, nor to give way to the ecclesiastical tyranny which soon again asserted itself. The great Statutes of Provisors and Præmunire were formed and passed in a new and effectual manner. The Laws of Mortmain, which the ecclesiastics had hitherto successfully defied, were brought into working order, so as to give a decided check to the vast and incessant accretion of wealth which had been enriching that body beyond all measure. The disorders of feudalism were also checked, and the interests of the people defended from attack. The trade and commerce of the country were encouraged by wise legislation. Ireland was subdued and organised—at least superficially—for the first time since the reign of John. There are, in short, few brighter periods of English history. The bent of this legislation was of that moderate and sensible kind which was rarely seen in the Middle Ages. It was inspired chiefly by the influence of the knights of the shires, who had imbibed their principles from the teaching of Wiclif and his followers, the persecution of these poor people being suspended for a few happy years; but Richard and Anne had much in common with their Parliament, and must not be deprived of their just share of credit.

1396. The disastrous termination of this peaceful and prosperous period was brought about by several causes. Considering the tumultuous character of the age, it was too good to last. The first shock was given in 1394 by the death of the "good Queen Anne," to whom it is probable that England owed much more than we shall ever know. Indirectly her death proved of the greatest service to the Continent, for at her court Wiclif's works were familiar, and when persecution arose because of those works, they found a safe home at Prague, from whence political circumstances removed them bodily to the Imperial Library at Vienna. After an interval of five centuries, having been, with few exceptions, entirely lost in England, they have now at last for the most part reappeared, by a sort of literary resurrection, excellently printed and edited. But they had done their work in Southern Germany. The good they did outweighed the evil of the Hussite extravagances, and formed no unimportant part of the basis on which Luther's revolt from

the Papacy was successfully erected. Anne's funeral was also the occasion of a quarrel between the king and the Earl of Arundel, which, though reconciled by the agency of the brother, whom Richard now raised to the Primacy, had much to do with the king's ruin. In 1396 he married the child Isabella of France, for which, as he afterwards said, "his people never loved him."

Again, the death of Constance of Spain, John of Gaunt's wife, proved disastrous. Richard owed much to the influence of his elder uncle in quelling the turbulence of Gloucester, and could not deny him the boon he craved in the legitimisation of the Beaufort family, his children by his mistress Catharine Swynford, whom he now married. This brought Gloucester out of his retirement; for his own position was lessened and the blood of the House depraved. Yet it was the issue of this very family which, in the person of Henry VII., was to redress the wrongs of Lancaster. But a still greater danger lay in wait for Richard. Henry Bolingbroke had been absent during the greater part of the third period, having betaken himself to the Crusades which were proceeding against the infidels, and served first in Palestine, and then, in company with the Teutonic knights, in Livonia. His absence was useful to England, and remotely so to Europe in general, for he had thus a share in founding the kingdom of Prussia. On his return, he came to terms with Richard and joined his Government; but the troubles which so soon ensued ominously gathered round his dangerous presence.

Lastly, the vast expedition Richard made to Ireland in 1394, though it obtained a valuable result, cost more than he had funds to meet, and unpaid national debts came upon the Crown. In 1396 government was in great difficulties; loans were refused; intrigues commenced in Parliament. In the midst of this threatening aspect of affairs, Richard received from Mowbray, Earl of Nottingham, information of a renewal of the old conspiracies between Gloucester, Arundel, and Warwick against the Crown; and seeing unmistakable signs of it, called round him the men of the old *régime*. Upon these at least he could rely on an emergency. It is almost certain that Henry was concerned in this conspiracy, but there was no sufficient evidence, and

having been already twice pardoned, such a thing might well seem incredible. So far from being executed on suspicion, he was made Duke of Hereford.

Parliament, pushed forward by these men, now began to complain of the king's expenditure, but really without any just cause; and Gloucester took a public opportunity to reproach him with indolence unbefitting a king. Richard began to believe the time had come to put an end to what he knew well enough was a dynastic struggle, and formed an inner Council consisting of the Hollands, his two half-brothers, the Duke of Albemarle—Shakespeare's Aumerle—who, as Duke of York, was killed at Agincourt, and so expiated a career of treachery, Despenser, Scrope, John Beaufort, son of John of Gaunt, and Salisbury, the head of the Montacutes — seven in all. The seizure and murder of Gloucester followed. On the principle of *cui bono* this was, and could not but be, put down to Richard, but it has never been actually proved. He now coerces Parliament and governs through an illegal committee of that body, sitting on in spite of prorogation, and with pretended power to act as if it were a Parliament. This was simple tyranny, and that is the proper characteristic of the fourth period. Under powers so conferred Richard placed seventeen counties out of law, raised forced loans, required Gloucester's adherents to purchase or repurchase pardons, and after his ill-advised management of the duel between Henry Bolingbroke and Mowbray, seized, on the death of his uncle, the Lancaster fiefs.

So easy was the process that it lured him to his destruction. The very completeness of the plan recoiled on the heads of the designers. The respect which he had gained passed away under such a mockery of the Constitution, and when he rashly led an army to Ireland, in order to revenge the death of his heir, young Mortimer, he left behind him a sullen and dissatisfied people without anything like a party willing to run a risk in his service. Then came the end. Deserted and cruelly betrayed, he was deposed by the man whom he had often spared, and who thus concluded with a terrible vengeance a long course of bitter hostility, nearly every act in which was bad.

It is then at least clear that others besides Richard must

bear the blame of this miserable ending of a reign which had its qualifying features. Perhaps it was too much to expect that the good part should be remembered after circumstances had set the king upon a different course. The country could not remain passive under a deliberate assault upon its hard-won rights, and yet he did not deserve the hatred of his people. The more we study his career and that of his rival the more we find our pity evoked for the one, and our resentment for the other. It was an ignoble course on the part of the nation to throw itself into the arms of Richard's hereditary enemy because it was the easiest means of subduing the son of the Black Prince. It was the direct cause of the Lancastrian calamities, the Wars of the Roses, and the long suspension of parliamentary liberties. It was the opening of an awful tragedy.

But in reality there was not much choice in the matter. The sort of statesmen who could have gathered together another "Good Parliament" were no longer to be found. The inevitable man was of a different sort. He would have been too strong for any party which should attempt to use him as a constitutional reformer. Every one knew his stern, powerful, and unscrupulous nature. The nation lay helpless, as so often happens in these cases, between the upper and the nether millstone, and it was ground to powder. As for the usurper himself, he was soon to learn how

"uneasy lies the head that wears a crown"—

a crown gained by such means. Thus came about the first break in the hereditary succession since the reign of John—a period of two centuries. The break invites us to consider the general condition of England and of Europe in the fifteenth century, and its relations to modern times. But before doing so let us place ourselves under Shakespeare's guidance, and observe how he, with true historical instinct, though with imperfect materials, unfolded the drama with which we are about to deal. In a book now little known, Schlegel's 'Dramatic Literature,' the author shows how completely the poet understood the lesson of all history, the doctrine of a moral Government working under an infallible law of retribution.

There are ten historical plays, eight of which, named after Richard II. and the kings of the fifteenth century, are consecutive. To these, which form a dramatic whole, King John and Henry VIII. serve as prologue and epilogue. Skilfully omitting the mass of Richard's reign, the great master fixes our attention on the tyrannical ending of it, and draws out the contrast it presents with his pitiful fall, the sure punishment. Next comes the usurpation of the House of Lancaster, the heavy cares and disappointments which attend undeserved success; though the cloud lifts for a brief moment when the hero of the House again represents the high qualities of the greater Plantagenets. But the doom cannot be escaped, and it is the more awful when it falls upon a vicarious sufferer, the feeble and saintly Henry VI. Here and there the gloom of the picture is relieved by the broad touches of humour which circle round the presentment of Falstaff. The purpose of the drama culminates in the inevitable retribution which overtakes the executioners of doom themselves, the too successful, cruel House of York, and it finds a fitting close in the gloomy solitude, despair, and death of Richard III. on Bosworth field; yet not without a gleam of Tudor light to herald the reigns of order and progress. We may well believe that Richard II.'s own career, if Shakespeare could have given it in full, would have had a superior interest to any of those he has selected, but writers have only arrived at a proper estimate of the reign quite recently, and the memory of the unhappy king has suffered accordingly. M. Wallon's original reading of his character has done something to restore the truth.

CHAPTER VI.

THE TRANSITIONAL CHARACTER OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

THE practice of taking history by centuries is nearly always misleading; but the fifteenth is quite exceptional, a distinctly transitional century, especially in England. At the beginning

of it we are still in the Middle Ages; at the end, almost in modern times. Politics, religion, social life, and literature, the four great landmarks which define civilisation, were all moving on to that great change which has made the subsequent ages so different from their predecessors. In politics and social life the age, set free by the many blows which the Wars of the Roses had struck at feudalism and the position of the baronage, advanced under the growing influences of the Third Estate and the recovered power of the kings. The movement was greatly aided by the simultaneous consolidation of the neighbouring States, France, Spain, and Germany. Each of these three countries rose in the fifteenth century out of a loose congeries of provinces into a more or less compacted nation. In that respect England had a great start of them, and was soon to use her advantage, knitting all the while numerous bonds of alliance and diplomacy with the members of the great European federation. Hence at the close of the century commences that more or less systematic and conscious Balance of Power which has continued ever since, the nations forming in line, contending for limits, and then, by treaty after treaty, settling down as they now stand in the map of Europe.

But the influences tending to unite the growing nations were far stronger than those of war and politics, which tended to separate them, and these are to be found within the sphere of what we rightly term the Renaissance, and generally place somewhere between the years 1450 and 1550. It would probably have come in some form or other as the ripe product of the growth of time; but its actual form was determined by two things — the discovery of printing, and the flight of learned Greeks into Italy from the falling Byzantine empire. The immense uprising of the European mind produced by the multiplication of books and the revival of classical literature, received at the end of the fifteenth century a still further impulse by the discovery of the New World and the sea-route to India. Europe itself became a new world, and all the relations of its component parts began to assume a new shape. Language, literature, commerce, discovery, and international law linked together the national units in a manner which powerfully affected each of them, and rapidly formed a sort of union not unlike, though much

larger than, that of the States of ancient Greece. In the course of time the eastern and northern portions of Europe fell into line, and even the Turks, who had played their part both in driving the Greeks into Italy and terrifying civilised Europe into occasional federation, became an outlying portion of the European system.

But the Renaissance was still more strongly felt on its religious side. The seeds of the Reformation were planted both in England and Germany by the pre-Reformation; but when the Renaissance was grafted into the stock it bore permanent fruit in both countries, though propagated in different ways. All Europe felt the movement; but in these two countries alone was produced a successful revolt against the Papal system, for they alone were thoroughly dissatisfied with the attempts which had been made to reform it, and each produced, though at different times, a leader who was not afraid to go to the bottom of all the complicated questions which began to present themselves. When we ask what it was that carried the English people so much more unitedly to their goal than their Teutonic brethren, we shall find the answer partly in the compactness of the insular situation, partly in the peculiar character of the English pre-Reformation, which allowed the "new learning" to soak into the English mind, and very much in the firm hold which had been retained, all through the Middle Ages, of the essential principles of Church freedom and independence of the Papacy. The great Statutes constantly re-enacted, the attitude of great kings, the freedom of representative institutions, all worked against the forces which the hierarchy, with the energy of despair, brought to bear upon the people.

This leading feature of the century in England, the English counter-Reformation, requires more attention than it usually obtains. Its apparent success was due to the dexterous diplomacy of the hierarchy, who knew how to take advantage of the very opening of the dynastic struggle, of the subsequent French War, and of the shifting phases of the Wars of the Roses. Its real failure was due to the causes above mentioned, and, speaking generally, to the dogged pertinacity with which the English mind clung to what it was forbidden to hold by an authority which it had learnt to despise.

Richard's "redeless" proceedings towards the end of his

reign had thrown into the background the great religious questions which had played so important a part in the previous portion. The persecuting tendencies of the hierarchy had been restrained for years by the same powerful party in the House of Commons which had saved, as far as we can judge, Wiclif's life. But what national party could stand by the ill-guided monarch when he had broken the Constitution, and developed a tyranny? With such a leader as Henry Bolingbroke was sure to be, the struggle must be profoundly dangerous, and what if Richard once more triumphed? What hold had they any longer upon the representative of French policy? An accidental result of the tyranny which no one could have foreseen turned out to be of supreme importance in this matter. The turbulent Earl of Arundel, and his brother the Archbishop of Canterbury, had been the first to feel Richard's wrath in 1397. The earl was beheaded and the primate banished. In France he and Henry Bolingbroke, who soon after followed him, met, and together concocted the measures which stamped the History of England.

The compact between Crown and clergy was perfectly natural. Henry had but a poor chance of establishing his dynasty against the claims of the Earl of March and the hostility of Richard's party, unless he could enlist the enthusiastic services of the clergy in his favour. Arundel was able to promise these services on one condition. There must be an entire change of State policy as regarded the "heretics"; there must be no more conflicts between the hierarchy and the Wicliffite knights of the shire. Henry must engage to pass a Statute at the very outset of his reign which should set all such questions at rest for ever. This he did within the first few months after his accession, when the Inquisition was first established in England by the Statute *De Heretico* 1401.
Comburendo, the Statute by which the ecclesiastics hoped to root out the Lollards, stop the circulation of Wiclif's Bible and Tracts, and arrest the ever-progressing attacks upon the exorbitant wealth possessed by the ecclesiastical body.

The Inquisition is seldom spoken of as such in connection with this Statute, but it is difficult to understand why. It had been introduced on the Continent in 1229, during the Albigensian Crusade, but the English history of the intervening time will have sufficiently explained how it happened that the

people of these islands escaped the plague. Archbishop Courtenay had indeed done his best to introduce it. Styling himself "Chief Inquisitor," he contrived, as we have seen, through the Ordinance of 1382 which the House of Commons repudiated, to provide that the "heretics" should be handed over by the civil arm to the prisons of the bishops, one of which at least, "Lollards' Tower" at Lambeth, is still visible; but this new Statute was a very different thing. Here is the terrible sentence of what has been rightly called an "infamous Statute": "Whenever the bishop of the diocese shall see fit to proceed to a definitive sentence against a convicted or relapsed heretic, the mayor or sheriff of the place shall attend, and having received the culprits at the hands of the ecclesiastical judge, shall them in a high place do to be burned." Thus it came to pass that, just as the Norman Conquest placed England for the first time under the continental system of separate ecclesiastical Courts for the clergy, the fountain of all the bitter waters which poisoned the relations between English Church and State, so, after an interval of little more than three centuries, this last and long-delayed importation from the Continent sounded the death-knell of the system. It was the inciting cause of the Tudor Reformation. Under this Statute, and under Arundel's "Constitution" of 1410, which prohibited the possession of translations of the Bible, except as approved by the bishop of the diocese (of course a real prohibition), great numbers of innocent people suffered imprisonment, branding, or death all through the fifteenth century. Men and women of both classes suffered;—the "Bible-men," who on the whole represented Wiclif and the subsequent Reformation, and the Lollards, who, following the rebellious spirit of John Ball, represented the Anabaptists and Sectaries of a later age.

It detracts but little from the un-English cruelty of these proceedings that the Statute was only irregularly enforced, and that in the vast majority of cases prosecutions ended in penance and recantation. There was a limit beyond which the humane English temper would not be driven, and English monarchs were happily in a very different position from those of France and Spain. But it must be remembered that even the unhappy people who recanted were still liable to be "imprisoned at the king's pleasure." What was the effect of

this treatment? It is part of our subject. We are engaged in tracing the peculiar character of the fifteenth century in England, and must by no means be satisfied with marking the great dramatic events which present themselves, the thunderstorms which purify the air. What was the real condition of the atmosphere?

Let us consider, then, what the constant self-acting effect of this Statute must necessarily have been in the case of those who were "imprisoned at the king's pleasure." These were not the heroes of their cause; but though unwilling to die for it, and willing to purchase liberty by recantation, what would their subsequent course in general be? The so-called "heresy" was only driven in; men only learnt how to propagate it in a thousand secret ways. Copies of Wiclif's Bible were multiplied, but jealously guarded from the agents of the Inquisition, and eagerly purchased in spite of their costly price. At Oxford, owing to the jealous independence of the authorities in Church and State which it had entertained for ages, there were more facilities for such secret proceedings than elsewhere. Constant efforts were made by the authorities during the century to suppress what evidently found much encouragement somewhere within University precincts; nor was it easy to deal with such matters in those numerous Colleges from which their founders had excluded monks and friars. It was that prescient exclusion which saved them, and them alone, at the Reformation; and the secular clergy whom they trained often carried with them to their parishes a certain sympathy with the persecuted Bible-men, often something more. Their perennial hostility to the monastic Orders of itself predisposed them in that direction.

The circumstances of the case, of course, preclude exact analysis of these influences, or any accurate estimate of their bearing on the Reformation when it came. Indications are not proof, but the rejection of such aids to the formation of judgments is not only superficial but pedantic. Those who have traced to the working of the Inquisition, and the widespread rebellion thereby caused, the even march of the English people towards the triumph of their freedom, the spirit of religion which so remarkably accompanied the advance of the "new learning," and the readiness with which both the Universities became the sustaining centres of the Tudor Re-

formation, hold no unreasonable opinion. These great results are not caused by the decrees of tyrants, nor the casual control of individuals, nor the importation of foreign books. We have to account for the extraordinary difference between the English Reformation and that of other nations, for the national character which it evinced, carrying all classes together,—a reform, and not a revolution out of which might have emerged a new Church and a new State.

In thus stigmatising Henry IV. as a conspirator with Arundel against the pre-Reformation, we are not to denounce either him or his son or grandson as mere time-servers, still less as hypocrites. To them the new doctrines—though John of Gaunt, the head of their House, had once favoured them—appeared subversive of all authority in Church and State, as well as repugnant to what they believed to be right. The statesmanlike Wykeham and Chichele, as well as the haughty and unscrupulous Courtenay and Arundel, had been their teachers. Even fine characters like Oldcastle were goaded at last by persecution into insurrection; and that remarkable man would hardly have been saved from execution for high treason, even if his so-called "heresy" had not brought him to the flames of the Inquisition. His real moderation is proved by his famous "Confession," from which we see that his denunciation of images and pilgrimages, and his denial of the doctrine of Transubstantiation, were his chief delinquencies. After his cruel death in 1418, the Reformers lost ground: Henry V. crushed out all political resistance of a serious kind, and we never again hear of them as a political force, such as had strengthened the House of Commons against his father. Beyond doubt, however, the treatment they received from the House of Lancaster threw their weight into the scale of York, and they were far from the least powerful of the discontented elements of society which swelled the Yorkist ranks.

Another circumstance which tended to depress the pre-Reformation was the renewal of the French War. The Lancastrians, as we shall see, had no choice but to renew it, and Henry V.'s victorious energy soon rallied his people round him. He and his friend Archbishop Chichele were by no means sorry that the popular mind should be drawn off from the pursuit of ecclesiastical reform. If, however, the Re-

formers had succeeded at this time in easing the ecclesiastics of half their superfluous wealth, more might possibly have been saved in the day of trial. We can now see that on the one hand the Reformers were right in asserting that no country could prosper where the ecclesiastical section of it, while failing to command the respect of the people for whom it existed, possessed a third, or even, as some say, a half, of the national income. On the other hand, the country had a great escape. The hand of revolutionary violence could not have been trusted to perform the delicate readjustment of property, which required the judicial treatment of an Alfred or an Edward I. Henry VIII. was far enough from that standard, but, bad as some parts of the process were in his hands, the principles were not only defensible but salutary; and the results justified his acts.

Here, also, is the place to notice the action and reaction of continental events during this century upon the ecclesiastical struggle going on in England. The Lollard discouragement which the concordat between the Lancastrian House and the clergy effected in the island was, on the other side of the Channel, matched by the total failure of the nations to reform the Papal system. The shocking degradation of the Papacy during its seventy years of "Captivity" and subsequent Schism, had forced Europe to lay aside its apathy, and take in hand the evils which had been so long growing insupportable. The great Councils of Pisa (1409) and Constance (1414-1419) were a noble attempt to throw off the burden of centuries; but as the members could only assemble on the basis of the received medievalised doctrines, and thus only touch the surface of things, the failure was only more stupendous. The Papacy revived, contemptuously tore away its silken fetters, and became more corrupt than ever. The general result was even worse; for the Councils forfeited, after their horrible treatment of Huss and Jerome, much of the respect formerly accorded to them. The general standard of morality was deplorably lowered by the prevailing influences of the Inquisition; and the gallant but undiscriminating spirit of the Bohemian resistance dashed itself in vain against the immovable mass of ecclesiastical authority.

The times were not yet ripe for the Reformation, and the English Reformers were not encouraged by that lesson. But

much the same thing happened to both the kindred communities. Like the suppressed Wicliffism in England, the Bohemian programme of the "Four Articles"—viz., the claim for freedom of preaching, Communion in both kinds, the reduction of clerical wealth, and the reform of morals—impregnated the undercurrent of continental life, not only in Bohemia, which had been raised under the House of Luxemburg to the position of a great European State, but in many parts of Germany, and even in France, Italy, and Switzerland. Yet though the Councils had failed, the lesson of their history was never lost. The union of the laity with the inferior clergy and the hierarchy had no longer to be claimed in theory, but had been exhibited as a practical fact. The clergy would never reform themselves, and were as yet powerful enough to put off the evil day. That would not always be so. And further, the "voting by nations," of which the English, after the battle of Agincourt, formed one, was a great step in advance towards that independent Church nationality for which the events of the fifteenth century were a distinct preparation. Brought forward by the astute Papacy to divide its threatening judges, the voting by nations had no small effect in producing the great revolt.

The continuance of the Wicliffite repression all through the century, although the Reformers had earned a right to the gratitude of the Yorkist kings, has not attracted much attention; but the renewed compact between the Crown and the hierarchy which was made by both Edward IV. and Richard III. had no doubt a great effect. Each of these kings, at the opening of their reigns, confirmed those old immunities of the clergy from the control of the Secular Courts, which had been greatly impaired in the course of ages; and the new papal government of England by legates *a latere* gave a unity to the ecclesiastical body unknown before. Nor had the political services of the Reformers been of that organised character which carried much weight when the Yorkist military Government had been once established; and Henry VII. carried the new system several steps further. But the Renaissance set free at last the social and literary forces which were rapidly developing at the end of the fifteenth century, and it was not long before they manifested their power. That the popular discontent with the clergy of the age was a

powerful factor of the reforming spirit may be gathered from the ballad literature which had such a wide circulation even in the fourteenth century, and from such books as 'Piers Plowman.' The people required leaders, and as soon as the rise of the town population and the spread of commerce had time to work they found them.

CHAPTER VII.

HENRY IV. (1399–1413) AND HENRY V. (1413–1422).

IN the renewal of the French war by the Lancastrian House the sons were as much concerned as their father. It colours the whole century, and obliges us to observe the state of France at the time. The vengeance taken by Charles the Wise for all the sufferings of France had been succeeded, as we have seen, by the collapse of the country under his successor. This collapse had been of a most serious character. Scarcely one of the numerous princes of the blood alive at Charles VI.'s accession but had a separate party of his own, and the four chiefs, his uncles, made efficient government impossible. Anjou ran off with the late king's treasure; Burgundy, on his marriage with the heiress of Flanders and acquisition of Franche Comté, commenced the series of great Dukes of Burgundy who became the rivals and enemies of France. It was their rivalry and bitter enmity which gave England its opportunity; the terrible woes of France ought not in fairness to be laid on the shoulders of the English.

Twice over in forty years Henry IV. had witnessed the unrepelled successes and unreturned insults of France, each lasting for several years. The expulsion of the English from their provinces had been followed by the systematic ravaging of the English shores, and so far from striking any blow in return, the government of Richard, too feeble even at its best to do more than provide for domestic affairs, had made truce upon truce with its neighbour, and ended by the marriage of the king with the daughter of France. The English had

good reason for not loving this policy. It had no element of security about it, and profoundly humiliated the people, who still remembered Edward III. and the Black Prince. There was at least a tacit compact with the usurping Lancastrian that he should rectify these errors when he had an opportunity. Even on this ground he had no choice; but he had provocations of a much nearer kind. When banished from England he had taken refuge with the French princes, who regarded him as a useful ally in future differences between the two countries; but as soon as his success placed Richard in his hands, and made the daughter of France a widow, her immediate kinsmen, honourably enough, took up her cause, and heaped every insult on the murderer, broke off the truce which he had renewed, and encouraged all his enemies to rebel. The weak point of the English at this time was Wales, the stronghold of the late unhappy king, and practically under the power of Owen Glendower, the restless fomenter of the movements which harassed Henry for half his reign. With him the French made a close alliance; and but for a timely victory over their fleet by that of the Cinque Ports in 1407, it would have been a still more serious matter.

It was not till the year after the victory that Henry succeeded in putting down the last of the four great insurrections which his usurpation had brought on him, and shook himself clear of the dictation of the Parliament which took advantage of his situation. By this time the factions in France which had been raging for a whole generation came to a frightful
1407. head by the murder of the Duke of Orleans at the hands of John Sanspeur of Burgundy, and the anarchy of the realm had reached such a height that the alliance of the English was greedily courted by both parties. It will thus be absolutely clear that it is a gross mistake to speak of the renewal of the French war as the mere result of either Lancastrian ambition or clerical policy, or as deserving to be reprobated by the historian. The Lancastrian House represented the people who had set them on the throne of the Plantagenets in making one more stroke for the recovery of the national inheritance, and in taking advantage of the change of circumstances to do so at the proper moment. England had been weak when France had been strong: the

turn had come for France to go through the period of internal trouble so common to all States in the Middle Ages; and England's weakness still continuing, she had not been able to resume her old position until now. At last the hour and the man had arrived.

The vacillations which characterised the first movements of the already worn-out usurper were caused by the divisions of his Council. He first supported the Burgundians (1411), and then, next year, induced by the prospect of recovering Aquitaine, the Orleanists. That recovery indeed almost at once took place, under the leadership of Clarence, Henry's second son; but when Henry V., on his father's death, deliberately resolved to employ the united force of all England in the task of winning back the whole of the old English provinces, he naturally found his most useful alliance with the Duke of Burgundy, whose hereditary feud with the reigning House, now roused to fever-heat, justified the prospect of a permanent support. It is enough then to repeat that we cannot with any show of reason isolate this Lancastrian war-renewal from the whole course of the struggle which grew out of Henry II.'s marriage with Eleanor of Guienne, or Aquitaine, in 1151.

The French had not calculated on the strength of the English national feeling on this point. Anything like statesmanship was indeed out of the question, under the circumstances of an imbecile king, an unprincipled queen, and a murderous civil war. The attempt to raise Scotland against the English government had been paralysed by Henry's good fortune in taking captive the youthful James Stuart, which enabled him to keep quiet James's uncle Albany, under fear of losing the Regency of Scotland. Educated in England and trained under the eye of Henry V., this was to be the future regenerator of his still backward and turbulent subjects. In short, Henry's unvarying success had worked wonders. Surrounded by his brave sons, his courage and conduct as well as theirs had triumphed over every obstacle. The actual fate of Richard, his victim, has never been clearly ascertained, but he was generally believed to be dead, and the survival of rumours to the contrary was ascribed to those who had fomented the various insurrections. The public mind was withdrawn from the question; and the loyal sup-

port of the ecclesiastical body,—no matter how gained,—raised the Royal Family to such a height that the national confidence, which had for years been withheld, now gathered round the great designs which princes and people alike entertained.

The division of the reign into the two parts, of weakness and insurrection, ending in 1408, and of prosperity and war-policy up to the death of the diseased king in 1413, is obvious. The first embraces much Constitutional history—such as the five steps to the throne, the abdication of Richard, his deposition by a Commission, Henry's claim made at the same moment, the assent of both Houses of Parliament as a Convention, and the summons of a new Parliament to meet in six days—all of which formed substantially the precedent for the case of William and Mary in 1689. But the constitutional value of the parliamentary action of the reign no longer takes the place once assigned to it. Henry's poverty and exhaustion during the costly period of the insurrections led to a wholly premature and short-lived domination of the House of Commons, which he threw off as soon as his throne was secure; but it had its value in teaching successive kings of England that they could not reckon without Parliament. It may be well here to name the insurrections which Henry put down. The first —leaving out the mere personal rising of Richard's friends, choked in their blood at Cirencester, Oxford, and London—was that of Glendower in 1401; the second, that more famous one of the Percies, quelled at Shrewsbury in 1403; the third, that of Archbishop Scrope and his friends at Shipton, followed by his execution in 1405; the fourth, that of Northumberland, in 1408, at Bramham Moor.

The only one of these that requires special notice is the third. Was the execution of the Archbishop a tyrannical act, a crime against God and man? We can judge for ourselves on the mere statement of undisputed facts. The Archbishop of York was an enthusiastic supporter of the claims of the young Earl of March, the heir of Lionel, Duke of Clarence, to the throne. Henry, whether usurper or not, was king *de facto*, accepted by the nation, legally appointed and crowned. Scrope was the soul of this rebellion, and was in arms against the king. He thus might

be held to forfeit all claim to trial by his peers, and to have subjected himself to the ordinary course of law. It was a crisis of the most acute kind, and an example was necessary. Parliament was right in declining to give its sanction to the execution; it was not its business, but, under the circumstances, that of an ordinary or even military tribunal. It simply postponed the question, which was not again raised. Henry had to act. Thus the Archbishop was properly arraigned before the king's officers, and rightly executed. That a king whose chief support lay in the clergy should venture on such an act is the best proof that the public opinion of the nation was with him. It was only sacrilege in the eyes of those who believed that the clergy were privileged to commit high treason.

The concluding years of Henry IV. may be taken as the beginning of Henry V.'s reign. The quarrels within his family which embittered those years were scarcely less calculated to wear out his enfeebled constitution than the armed struggles and parliamentary difficulties of the earlier period. They arose out of the act of Richard II. in legitimising, under pressure from John of Gaunt, Katharine Swynford's children. All three of this generation of Beauforts were capable men, and Henry, the second, having become Bishop of Winchester early in Henry IV.'s reign as well as tutor to Prince Henry, was in a leading position. His influence with his pupil became of importance when the old king fell into ill-health, and Bedford, whose great abilities were soon appreciated, joined their party. Clarence, supported by Archbishop Arundel, endeavoured to make head against this powerful combination in the Council, and succeeded in carrying the king with him. Henry had just cause of offence with the Prince and the Beauforts; and family jealousies were sufficient to draw a line which is not very distinctly visible, for both sections agreed upon the main points as to France and the reform of the Church, and neither had any leanings towards Wicliffism. However, Prince Henry was dismissed from the Council in 1412, a circumstance which, perhaps, gave rise to the legends of his temporary wildness which Shakespeare has transmitted, and which may not be unfounded.

It was during the last year of Henry IV.'s reign that

Prince Henry, as Warden of the Cinque Ports, planned that reform of naval affairs which the times required, and which he effected as soon as his father died. The Cinque Ports were then reorganised and Channel piracy put down, after disorder had been rife in the Narrow Seas for half a century. Southampton was selected for the building of the new and large species of ships with which Henry intended to put the warlike ideas of the family into practical shape.

Henry V.

1415. The reign of Henry V. thus began with a very different prospect from that presented by his father when he deposed Richard. With almost every advantage of mind and body, he dazzled his subjects as scarcely even the Black Prince had dazzled them when he appeared upon the stage. His education both for peace and war had been unrivalled even by Edward I. or Edward III., and the contrast of his pleasing manners and address to the gloomy, guilt-laden bearing of the late king filled all hearts with joy. We need not defend his renewed claim to the crown of France, nor the immense demands made by Chichele in his name as the condition of peace. On military grounds these acts were justifiable, and they must be taken not as isolated acts, but in relation to all the past transactions. Nor need we observe upon the prompt destruction of the conspirators at Southampton further than to remark that it was a French plot, righteously punished, and to point out the significance of the fate which thus befell the Earl of Cambridge. It introduces us at once to the Wars of the Roses, for his execution was never forgiven by his family. His widow, Anne Mortimer, became in 1424 the heiress of all the claims which descended from Lionel, Duke of Clarence; and their son, who, by the death of his uncle at Agincourt, had become Duke of York, soon came to be regarded by a part of the nation as their legitimate sovereign.

For the battle of Agincourt, as well as for the preparation which led to that splendid victory, we have a good guide in Sir Harris Nicolas's monograph on the subject; and for the place it fills in the series of medieval battles, we may well

refer to Mr Oman's 'Art of War in the Middle Ages.' On Monstrelet's Chronicle we are dependent for most of the facts of Henry's campaigns. We connect his name with those of Froissart and Comines, though he is inferior to both. This trio of writers, belonging to the Flemish frontier, and thus in a position to deal with Burgundians, French, and English from a neighbourhood common to them all, forms the glory of the century. From them we gather up the last notes of chivalry; from Comines we obtain the first specimen of modern history. From the pages of Monstrelet it will be understood better than from modern eulogies how Henry V. came to be regarded as the leading man of Europe, and the destined head of the Crusade which the advance of the Ottomans was now pressing upon all Christian nations. Whatever the original defect of the Lancastrian title, it could not be denied that his brief career raised his country out of a position which was unworthy of her former history, and that, with the aid of his brother Bedford, he conferred upon her a thirty years' uneasy tenure of the high place he had secured.

The phases of the war divide his reign with sufficient distinctness. The campaign of Agincourt, taken with its effects upon England, marks the first period. The second series of campaigns, from 1417 to 1420, defines the second period. These campaigns are undertaken in close alliance with the Duke of Burgundy, and end in the sovereignty of the English over the chief part of France under the Treaty of Troyes. The third campaign, of 1421, ends with the death of the hero.

The great landmark of the second period is the murder of John Sanspeur at Montereau in 1419, in revenge for his murder of Orleans twelve years before. Happening at the exact time when Henry was prepared by his conquest of Normandy to take advantage of it, the youthful and exasperated Duke Philip, as well as the flagitious Queen of France, made no scruple of handing over France to the conqueror; and the Family of Orleans alone represented, in the south-eastern provinces, the refusal of the nation, as a whole, to submit. From 1422 to 1435 the kings of England considered themselves not only in name, but substantially, kings of France, governing, as they did from the capital, and holding a very large proportion of its territory. After the last of

1419.

1422–1435.

those dates their rule in North France began to decline, and in all parts, except Calais, came to an end completely in 1453.

The two most observable points in Henry's rapid conquest are the genius with which he turned to account the rude artillery of the age, by which, especially at the sanguinary siege of Meaux, he was enabled to subdue the most obstinate resistance; and the part taken by the Scots in the defence of France. These allies entered into the quarrel with the most determined courage and enthusiasm. Not only did they supply large bodies of knights, who formed the flower of the French forces, but they invaded the North of England. It was by their prowess that Clarence was defeated and killed at Beaujé in 1421, a loss deeply felt in England; and they held their own in every battle till they were exterminated at Crevant in 1423 by Salisbury and at Verneuil by Bedford in 1424. Then it was that James Stuart, who had fought by the side of his English tutors, Henry and Bedford, was set free, and, impregnated with English cultivation, began his beneficent career among his own people; to end, however—for it could hardly be otherwise in that age—by assassination at their hands. If we inquire why it was that France in her double agony was temporarily ruined twice over by her neighbour and rival, while England, though torn by civil war, escaped invasion during her periods of weakness, the answer is to be found not so much in the accident of the English succession of heroic kings, nor in her invincible archers, nor even in the superiority of her several armaments, but in the older unification of her territory, and the sense of injury inspired by the loss of the Norman and Gascon provinces. France has for so many ages presented such an imposing figure by its large and yet compact territory, and by its fine strategical position, that it is only historical students who remember its gradual emergence from the nominal lordship of Counts of Paris over France to the incorporation, at the close of the Middle Ages, of the great feudal States which Charles the Great had grouped together in the western portion of his vast but loosely organised empire.

Looking back upon the situation as it struck the English when their beloved king died, still in his youth, at the

zenith of his glory, leaving as his sole heir an infant of nine months old, we can well understand the dismay with which they contemplated the prospect before them. No one except the Black Prince was ever mourned in England with such a desperate sense of loss; and yet there were no signs of collapse on the horizon of affairs. Two strong sons of the strong usurper still bore the weight of the two crowns. Bedford, only thirty-three years old, had already shown the utmost courage and capacity; Gloucester, only thirty-two, was still the handsome, warlike knight who had fought by his brother's side at Agincourt, and had not yet alarmed the nation by his turbulence. But what the people justly feared was the party spirit which successful war had concealed, and the loss of their great king's restraining hand. It was as well that they did not forecast the dangers in store for the nation in the weak intellect of the little king of France and England, contracted, no doubt, through his mother from the insane Charles VI., nor know that the over-development of the religious side of his character under his ecclesiastical tutors would unfit him for kingship, while the rougher methods of trying to make a man of him could only break his spirit. In this failure, however, of proper education, Henry of Windsor contrasts favourably with Henry of Winchester, whose training was of much the same kind. Henry III. proved the best soldier of the two, and was not deficient in intellect, but the system in which he was brought up failed to make him a consistent Christian man, as Henry VI. certainly was, though rightly refused the canonisation demanded by Henry VII., because he was, as the Pope said, too much of a "natural,"—too little the product of a character formed by the struggle with evil, which a sound man was to be publicly honoured for exemplifying before the world.

Quite useless are the speculations in which many have indulged as to what might have happened had not Henry V. been arrested by the hand of death at the very opening of what seemed a grand future career. We may perhaps venture to interpret the design of the stroke. The regeneration of Europe and of England was not to be intrusted to the blood-stained House; the lesson of retribution was to be made more conspicuous by the tantalising and momen-

tary apparition of a hero who seemed capable of influencing the world largely for good. He had many qualifications for the task besides his military aptitude. He was scholarly, industrious, trustworthy, devout, charitable. But he was not, as all successful reformers have been, before his age; and while acknowledging his virtues, we may easily overrate, under the influence of regretful wishes and romantic dreams, the character of this remarkable man. He was, after all, a true son of Henry IV. Though far above the level of ordinary monarchs, there are all the marks about him of a hard, sometimes cruel, soldier. Familiar with the sight of death, confident in his political claims and his Papal faith, we observe a want of generosity and human sympathy. Unable to perceive the need of any such reforms as the followers of Wiclif had in vain proposed, he was no less a bigot and fanatic than the bishops with whom he was allied. It is absurd to attempt to raise him higher than this, as if he could stand the rare test of a judgment based on abstract right and wrong. He is human, and we make allowances; he is English, very English, and we have a right to be proud of him. We must not be misled by romance.

With the death of Harry of Monmouth the whole history of Regencies and Protectorships begins, and that history opens the great Civil War. His unfortunate son was always under government, first of his uncles, then of his wife and her favourite ministers, Suffolk and Somerset. The fundamental Constitution of the realm was that the "Great Council of the Lords," as the king's natural advisers, were responsible for the government when the king was specially incapacitated. It was they who refused Gloucester the title of Regent during Bedford's absence in France, so that he only issued the Summons to Parliament as the "king's uncle." It was they who subsequently established him as Protector in Bedford's absence, but to act only with the "consent of the Council." The names carried a most important distinction. A Regent was a temporary king; a Protector was merely a viceroy, with very limited powers, acting in the name of the king. The office passed away with Cromwell and his son. Each of those who preceded them came to an untimely end,—Gloucester, York, Richard III., and Somerset. The King-maker and Clarence held the joint title of "Lieutenants

for King Henry." The great Earl of Pembroke, in the first two years of Henry III.'s reign, stands by himself. He was *Rector regis et regni*, with the Pope' Legate and Peter de Roches as his appointed counsellors.

CHAPTER VIII.

HENRY VI.—PART I. (1422–1450).

THIS long and confused reign must be taken in two parts, divided by the year 1450, when the French war, which occupies the first, is exchanged for Civil War, which occupies the last. The French war itself requires also a division which 1422.
is fairly made by the apparition of Joan of Arc in 1429, and 1429.
the Treaty of Arras in 1435. In the first the great Duke of 1435.
Bedford extends still further his brother's conquests, and seems about to subdue the south-eastern provinces which still held out. In the subsequent period Joan of Arc delivers France from its despair; it closes with the death of Bedford, and with the Treaty which broke up the English position. In the last the process of its disintegration is gradually completed, and the English expelled. This brings on the Civil 1453.
War. Up to 1442 there had been no domestic events in England of any interest, so entirely did the French war engross public attention.

The military success of John, Duke of Bedford, was secured by the two battles already mentioned; the diplomatic success by the triple connection between himself and the Dukes of Burgundy and Brittany, formed by his own and the latter Duke's marriage with the sisters of Philip the Good. Of the two the Burgundian alliance was by far the most important; for the common interest worked steadily along with the family feud between the princes of Burgundy and Orleans. The strength of the alliance was even proof against the impolitic and immoral conduct of Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, who insulted Philip by carrying off the runaway wife of his cousin; but it was eventually shaken by the equally impolitic second

marriage of Bedford himself with Jacquetta of St Pol, or Luxemburg. But the civil success of Bedford's administration of Normandy is by far the most interesting, though least known, of the causes of the English hold upon their French conquests.

It was an organisation of a more complete nature, because more advanced and thoroughly English, than even that which was due to Edward I. in Aquitaine; and was initiated by Henry V., whose share must not be forgotten. The two brothers, perceiving how precarious was the tenure of their other conquered provinces, determined to unite Normandy to England as one nation, and so repair the injury suffered by the English at the hands of Philippe Auguste. Gallant as their resistance had been, the people of Normandy, with their accustomed good sense, fell in with these arrangements, when resistance was no longer possible. Bedford now gave them a representative government, guaranteed their customs and franchises, established excellent Courts of Law where the strictest justice was administered, and, more than all, a local police drawn from the people themselves, a militia and police in one, armed and disciplined. It was a provincial community of the middle classes, working under English chief lords. Thus in a marvellously short time a reign of order commenced, trade flourished, and a real community of interests bound together the conquerors and the conquered, whose blood had much already in common; while the English control was secured by fortified castles and the command of the Seine from the British Channel. At the same time literary progress was secured by the foundation of the University of Rouen.

During these seven years affairs in England were chiefly coloured by the quarrel between Duke Humphrey and Bishop Beaufort, who for a time lost some ground by accepting a Cardinal's hat in 1428. But nevertheless he must at this time be considered as the representative of a patriotic policy abroad, as well as of order at home, while his rival was pursuing selfish interests. Later on, the verdict must be reversed. The bishop's great wealth, well husbanded, was practically spent in loans to both Henry and Bedford in succession; his great talents and official experience, acquired in three reigns, gave him full possession of that knowledge of both

domestic and foreign affairs which distinguished the Lancastrian House. As Chancellor he so largely expanded the jurisdiction of his Court that though, as a Court of Equity, it belongs to the previous century, its very origin has been ascribed to Beaufort. At any rate it was he who first exercised the control of Chancery over the marriage of infants, and developed the system of Uses and Trusts, which had the incidental effect of enabling the clergy to evade the laws of Mortmain, and of so powerfully protecting estates from forfeiture that it considerably prolonged the Wars of the Roses. His private life was unexceptionable, his courage high, as he proved on the Crusade against the Hussites. On the other hand, he had the defects of such a nature and such a position;—the restless intrigue and impatience of superiors which marked the Lancastrian House; the pride and avarice with which the "rich Cardinal" was not unjustly charged; the nepotism which placed his kinsmen in the leading posts of command, for which they were for the most part incompetent; the factious violence which distinguished him quite as much as his rival.

Duke Humphrey was at least equally proud and turbulent, with the additional stain of a damaged moral character; but much was forgiven to a gallant soldier who, overpowered in the front ranks at Agincourt, had been only saved by the prowess of King Henry himself, and whose frank, genial manner caused his errors to be soon forgotten. His policy with regard to the French war was not only soldier-like and popular but really wise. He was right in believing that the empire formed by his brothers could only be retained by ungrudging supplies, and by officers of a superior type to Beaufort's relatives. He had also, in common with the Church reformers of the age, a clear sense of the national right to be independent of the Roman See, and he went far beyond what might have been expected into the incipient movements of the Renaissance, of which he was a chief promoter, as his noble benefactions to Oxford prove. These principles, which were genuinely his own, caused him to be called "the good Duke Humphrey," and it fretted the people to see that the political ecclesiastics were too much for him. The better side of his character came out after Bedford's death; and when he was murdered in 1447, so intense was the popular

feeling that it was never appeased till the Yorkists, with whom he was allied, were placed on the throne of the Lancastrians.

1429–1435. The second period of the French war commences with one whose memory has been shamefully pursued by the hostility of the French and English alike with such fatal success that it is scarcely a century since her fame has been vindicated. But Joan of Arc has now been placed at the very head of all the heroines of history, and is likely to remain there. Perhaps of all his claims to our admiration Bedford's gallant leadership of the English, during the reverses brought about by this wonderful woman, stands highest. They would have appalled a less noble spirit. His tenacious grasp of Paris, his vigilant observation of Charles's movements, his skill in dealing with Burgundy, remind us of the campaigns of modern masters of the art of war, placed in the midst of equal difficulties. In connection with his policy the two coronations of the child-King of England and France require attention. The first, at Westminster, in 1429, put an end to Gloucester's boisterous Protectorate, and gave a permanent advantage to the Cardinal, who recovered his position as soon as ever he was placed on equal terms with his rival. He soon contrived to make his own policy prevail, and that policy in the end decided the course of the war and sealed the fate of the House of Lancaster. The second coronation, at Paris, in 1431, was Bedford's counter-movement against Joan of Arc, who had fulfilled her promise to crown Charles VII. at Rheims. But the French had by this time repented of the factious divisions which had passed them over to an English king; and Philip the Good's personal quarrel with Bedford now began to bear fruit. So also on the other side did the coronation of Charles. Philip, sagaciously interpreting the signs of the times, was now persuaded to mask his desire for peace under pretence of attempting a general pacification, with the Pope as mediator: and Bedford found himself caught in a trap from which he could not escape.

From the famous Congress of Arras in 1435 Bedford did indeed escape by death, and Cardinal Beaufort had to take his place during his fatal illness. It was the greatest political gathering Europe had yet seen. Ambassadors of the highest

rank attended from every Court of Europe; for the war had long disconcerted international arrangements, and terms were proposed to England which it was madness to refuse. They were simply required to give up Paris and the Isle de France, retaining what they had always held to be their right, Normandy and Aquitaine. Here interposed the fatal influence of English faction. Gloucester and his party clamoured against any concession, and Beaufort dared not confront him. Neither dared he stay at the Congress with a view to obtaining better terms. Yet the situation could not possibly continue for any length of time. When the Cardinal and his friend De la Pole, Earl of Suffolk, whom he now placed at the head of the administration, concocted, nine years later, the disgraceful plan of buying peace by a portionless marriage, accompanied by the secret article conveying the cession of Maine and Anjou, it was too late to defend the remainder of the English conquests.

The third period of the war witnessed an entire change of its character. It soon became for the English a desultory, ill-supported, and desperate war of defence: no quarter was given: martial law became the rule. Roving bands of free-booters acted much as the Free Companies did in Edward III.'s time, and with the same result. In 1436 the English were expelled from Paris. The Duke of York's Regency of France, in that and the next year, exhibited a certain military capacity, and probably, if supported from England, he might have been a successful general. He was voted too young; and was superseded by Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, who was certainly too old. At his death in 1439, York was again appointed Regent, and governed, amidst increasing difficulties, with some credit, till 1444, when Beaufort's policy at last prevailed. Few strokes of statecraft have marked the History of England more deeply. Having educated, with the help of the Earl of Suffolk, his nephews, John and Edmund Beaufort, in his own party politics, the Cardinal gained his first triumph in the liberation of the Duke of Orleans, a state prisoner who had been detained ever since the battle of Agincourt, on condition that his heavy ransom should be remitted if he brought about a peace. This of itself affronted the nation. His second triumph was the recall of York, and the substitution of John Beaufort in

1435–1450.

1440.

1444.

his place, who, on his death, was succeeded by Edmund, both of them as Lieutenant-Generals and Governors, not Regents. The growing exasperation of York's friends at his treatment led in 1449 to his exile in Ireland, which he was sent to govern. The third triumph was the celebrated marriage of the king to the brilliant young Margaret of Anjou
1445. in 1445, secretly negotiated and managed by Suffolk.

When, however, it was perceived that York's dismissal had been contrived for the express purpose of effecting this disastrous alliance, vengeance was decreed upon Suffolk; and five years later, his murder was looked upon as a sort
1450. of "Lynch-law," necessitated by the failure of justice. The arraignment of the Cardinal for his indefensible policy is a powerful document, significant of the advance of popular interference in public affairs. Sharon Turner's 'History of England' and Mr Gairdner's Preface to the Paston Letters throw much light on these matters. The king's marriage secured the enthusiastic influence of Margaret over her husband in favour of Suffolk and the Beauforts, her devoted friends, and the country drifted under their government to ruin. Gloucester and his party were completely overruled, and their remonstrances unheeded. We can hardly doubt that he was got rid of by foul means in 1447. Suspicion fastened upon Suffolk, who had every reason for wishing him dead; but as it was never proved, nor could reasonably be charged either to the king or the Cardinal, it remains a mystery. The latter survived his rival but a few months. Suffolk and the Beauforts were now left supreme, but this only hastened the catastrophe. The removal of the two great princes of the blood who had for so long a time governed or misgoverned England, broke up what little sense of security still remained, and no one trusted the Queen or the ministers. Suffolk seized every office, and was believed to have a design, by means of the intended marriage of his son with the Lady Margaret Beaufort, upon the Crown itself.

In another way the virulence of faction ruined the English position in France. The Cardinal and Suffolk, under an agony of alarm lest the secret part of the treaty, the cession of Maine and Anjou, should become known to their enemies, delayed so long to fulfil their engagements that all respect for English good faith was forfeited. At last, after the Car-

dinal's death, a gross offence was given by the treacherous capture of Fougéres in Brittany, under the connivance of Suffolk and Somerset; and this justifiably cancelled the truce. Thus, in 1449, the war was recommenced by France, with the aid of the Duke of Brittany. The English provinces were entirely unprepared, and Edmund Beaufort, Earl of Somerset, the Governor, proved incapable. On his disgraceful surrender of Rouen, the Normans rose in arms, and almost without a struggle the English were ignominiously expelled. The battle of Formigny in 1450 was but the *coup de grâce.*

Nor was England in a state to bear these things with patience. From king to magistrate the eye surveyed a government of incapable people. Parliaments had been summoned as seldom as possible, for the Government feared them. Dreadful plagues had raged in 1445 and 1446. The cruel, undisciplined soldiers of the long war, now discharged, infested the country. Everything seemed to fail at once. It was no wonder that despair seized the people, and that the nobles began to be pushed on to interfere, as in the earlier days of King John and Henry III. Jack Cade's insurrection was promoted by the leading gentry of Kent and Sussex, favoured by the Cinque Ports, and at first encouraged even by London. The Duke of York, on whom the people's eyes were fixed, and other lords of the royal blood, who with him had been excluded from the Council, hurried over from Ireland and elsewhere; while Somerset, fearing for his influence with the king, hastened over from Cherbourg. York gained the first success, not indeed with Henry, but with Parliament, where his chamberlain was chosen Speaker; and now he was strong enough to arrest Somerset. The king, however, stood by his minister, and dissolved Parliament. The French took this for a signal to advance upon the last remaining province of England in France, and soon overran what was left of Aquitaine. Talbot's expedition to recover it in 1453 was a momentary episode, ending in the death of the last great soldier of the French wars. Thus ended the Anglo-Gascon history of three centuries, of which almost the only tangible relic is the famous series of documents already mentioned as the Gascon Rolls.

CHAPTER IX.

HENRY VI.—PART II. (1450–1461).

THE insurrection of Jack Cade is properly taken as the commencement of one of the most deadly civil wars which have ever afflicted any European nation,—happily a war of barons and their retainers, rather than of the nation generally. The towns for various reasons suffered but little. It was not for want of efforts to prevent its commencement that the war broke out; for there was a vivid presentiment that it would be terrible when it once began. Five years were consumed in bitter animosities before a battle was fought, a complicated period which we must try to understand; but the conflict was felt to be inevitable, and the reasons for that conviction have been made apparent enough in the preceding chapters.

It was about the very time when the French war came to an ignominious end that Richard Neville, who was to dominate the course of events for twenty years, sprang at once into the lofty position from which he was able to act. He now
1449. became Earl of Warwick in consequence of his wife, Ann Beauchamp, daughter of the great knight, Richard, Earl of Warwick, already mentioned, coming into the inheritance of the immense Beauchamp estates by the death of her brother and his daughter. The Nevilles had been for some generations climbing steadily to greatness, and now it culminated. Richard's father, third son of the first Earl of Westmoreland, had married the heiress of the Montacutes, and thus added their Earldom of Salisbury to the Yorkshire lands his father left him. The Duke of York had married Cicely Neville, sister of this Salisbury and aunt of Warwick. Through Cicely Neville were derived the ability, the decision, and force of character which were so conspicuous in that family, and which displayed themselves in Edward IV. and Richard III. The blood of the Duke of York himself, in which the chivalrous kingliness of the Plantagenets was mingled with the turbulent violence of the Mortimers and Hollands, and which, in spite of his military training, produced a composite character, undecided, indiscreet, and

yet obstinate, predestined him to play a part really inferior to that of the Nevilles; and the kingmaker would seem by only an accident to have succumbed at last to the young king who shared with him the Neville blood.

When princely men like these were on the stage, the feeble Henry was of course a mere puppet, and his queen the one person they had to fear. When she had for a time exhausted the resources of an indomitable spirit, it was inevitable that the new King and the Kingmaker should fight it out to the end. It was with her alone, backed by the King of France, that Warwick could conspire with any hope of succeeding in his last desperate assault upon the Yorkist throne. A grand and romantic career has been suitably enshrined in Lord Lytton's romance; but for a more trustworthy history of the man we can now refer to Mr Oman's monograph.[1] The elements of strength derived by the Lancastrian and Yorkist parties respectively from the nation itself, independently of their leaders, will come out as we proceed.

The two great State papers which exposed to the people the grounds of the opposition to Henry's unfortunate government will be found in Mr Gairdner's luminous Preface to the Paston Letters. Those letters form our chief authority for a period of extreme obscurity, caused by the almost entire cessation of Latin chronicles, and by the rude English prose of the fourteenth century not having yet been refined by the progress of the Renaissance.[2] It is a sort of silent twilight before the birds sing at dawn.

The sense of helplessness produced by the easy success of the French in Aquitaine led to the ill-advised rising of the Duke of York and his friends in 1452, and to his oath, when he found no support, that he would refrain from doing so again. Henceforth when he broke this oath, as he soon did, he bore the stain of perjury, which cost him dear. The subsequent defeat of Talbot, who had nearly won back the English provinces before he fell into the error of despising his enemy, had the further effect of bringing on the fit of insanity latent in the king's constitution. The

[1] Warwick the Kingmaker, by Charles W. Oman. Macmillan & Co.

[2] A sketch of the chief factors in the English Renaissance will be found in a "Memoir of Grocyn," vol. ii., Collectanea, Oxford Historical Society.

national incompetence was proved by the fact that even a Parliament in the Yorkist interest stultified itself by passing a resolution to reinforce Talbot with 20,000 archers, and then postponing action till too late. Such a force, we may well believe, considering the proved loyalty of the provincials to the English, would have turned the scale. Government was evidently breaking up.

The birth of Henry's son during this period of insanity added to the bitterness with which the Queen and Somerset regarded the man whose position made him necessarily "Protector" of the realm; and the sense of her sole responsibility for the defence of her child's rights turned the royal partisan into a sort of Fury, or rather into the likeness of one of the lower animals fiercely defending her young. York's first Protectorate of 1454 was modelled on that of Gloucester, and, like his, could only work in circumstances of settled order which were impossible in that century. Somerset was now kept in confinement, as he had previously kept his rival; so that when the king suddenly recovered, and York's Protectorate *ipso facto* ceased, civil war was close at hand. Somerset, once more Prime Minister, deposed the Earl of Salisbury from the Chancellorship, and York, deprived of his Captaincy of Calais, was not summoned to Parliament. He and his friends now armed their retainers, and rose in rebellion against the Government. Were they rebels?

The difficulty in answering this question may be judged by the fact that almost every History of England takes a different view as to the rights, the justice, and the expediency of the movements of the two parties of York and Lancaster. Technically this was rebellion, but the question remains,—Was the country in a state to justify it? The insecurity of the Channel from the attacks of the French was urged as a plea of the same sort as that used by the barons in relation to Scotland and Wales under Henry III. Distrust suggested treachery, and the country called for a strong man. As to right, it was impossible to deny the "meek usurper's" plaintive plea that his family had only obeyed the will of the nation; but the Yorkists might well argue that their own right still remained. Their claim, indeed, would certainly have come to nothing, had it not been represented by York

and the Nevilles. As it was, they were gathering on their side all the more permanent elements of strength, the commercial, progressive, and popular elements. Above all, they enlisted in their favour that undefined dissatisfaction with the ecclesiastical system which had kept itself in power by its alliance, on the basis of the Inquisition, with the three Lancastrian kings in succession. There was not really much difference in these respects between the leaders of parties; but, in a general way, the mass of the nobility, who felt their obligation to stand by the Crown, were on Henry's side; the middle classes, led by a few great nobles, on the side of York. It was remarked that even the sons of those who died for Lancaster ranged themselves by degrees on the side where the real strength was soon seen to lie.

The first battle of St Albans, in 1455, was simply a violent personal combat between the great lords, supported by their immediate retainers. Its importance lay in the slaughter of Edmund, Duke of Somerset, the one experienced minister left to Henry, and of his friends, the two great lords of the north, Northumberland and Clifford; as also in the way it brought Warwick to the front, his influence having as yet been of a more obscure though still real kind. Still further, we note the battle for the effect it had upon the poor gentle king. Another period of insanity forced Parliament to grant York a second Protectorate, less limited than the first, since, until the young Prince should come of age, he could now only be dismissed by the Lords in Parliament. However, in three months the king recovered, and the lords used their powers; but York could never again become a mere prince of the blood. If the Paston Letters correctly tell us that Henry wished now to make York his Lieutenant, but that the Queen, who "is a grate & strong labourid woman," prevented it, it is a heavy charge. No doubt she simply looked to the future of her child, whose father was unable to protect him; and who could wonder? The die had been cast long before. Warwick, now Captain of Calais, at least protected the Channel; but he was also building up his power on the English coast for the struggle which he knew to be at hand. The only resource of the harassed king and his ministers was to keep off the collision as long as possible by vigilance, and by the strict separation of the combatants. For this purpose 1455.

the king and queen kept guard at Coventry; while Salisbury, at the head of his family forces, posted himself at Middleham in Yorkshire, and the Duke of York sometimes in London and sometimes on the Welsh borders. Henry, in 1458, attempted to bring to an end this most dangerous state of armed expectancy by a plan of pacification, which took outward expression in the famous procession to St Paul's, when, behind the king, the queen walked hand in hand with York, the new Duke of Somerset with Salisbury, the Duke of Exeter with Warwick. The terms of reconciliation were such as admitted that the Yorkists had hitherto been in the wrong, a circumstance of some weight in balancing the arguments.

A spark was enough to kindle such materials as these. It was struck from the collision of Warwick's ships with the enemy in the Channel. Already he had twice obtained petty successes with his little flotilla, and now, regardless of numbers and international rights, his ships, though beaten, had taught an English lesson to the Spanish fleet conveying Lubeck merchandise. He had been summoned to answer the complaints of the aggrieved merchants in London. Of course he could not move without an armed force, and the quarrel of one of his men raised the cry for which many were waiting.

1459. The battles now began in grim earnest. That of Blore-heath, in Staffordshire, struck the second blow for York. Here Salisbury and the Yorkshire Yorkists, in full march to Ludlow, according to the plan of campaign arranged between him, York, and Warwick, overthrew the Lancastrian Lord Audley with ease. This was followed by a Yorkist reverse, inflicted by Henry in person at Ludlow, where the whole Yorkist army, after a few ineffectual shots, deserted by Trollope, made off at night, leaving their banners on the field. This should be reckoned as a Lancastrian victory, though bloodless, and placed to the credit of the king, who behaved as well as a general could,—probably being just then in better health. So passed the year 1459. The country now took sides. The towns of the south and east, where York was strong, London and the Cinque Ports leading the way as of old, were resolved that he and their favourite Warwick should not be crushed. Calais became the focus of the

movement on one side, and Ireland on the other; Kent the gathering-place of the troops which advanced upon the Lancastrians at Northampton. Here the Yorkists won the 1460.
day, being assisted by treachery, just as the king's side had been assisted at Ludlow. Now it was that the Archbishop of Canterbury, Bourchier, carried over to the Yorkists the great body of the ecclesiastics, who deserted the royal party when they saw the country was turning round. He becomes Treasurer, and Warwick's brother Chancellor, under the new government which was forced upon Henry; and York now openly claims the throne in Parliament. This is the new stage reached in the war.

Neither the judges nor the King's Serjeants dared at this crisis to decide the question of right, and the Lords at last effected a compromise, by which Henry was to be king for life, York at his death,—thus throwing over Prince Edward, and driving the queen to desperation. Her case had now become very definite. Was her son or the duke to be king? The Lancastrian baronage acknowledged the issue, and loyally responded to her call at York. The duke's hour had come. Rushing to the north with Salisbury, he allowed his forces, out of some foolish punctilio, to be surrounded and destroyed at Wakefield by the Lancastrian army, which was three times as large as his own. The victory was made complete by the slaughter of himself, his youthful son, Rutland, and Salisbury; but that was almost immediately avenged.

The fall of the two older leaders of the Yorkists was in reality the salvation of their cause, for it brought the youthful Edward to the front, and, backed up by Warwick, there were to be no further marks of indecision, no erratic chivalry in the new king's conduct of the war. Two months after the decisive battle of Wakefield his reign began, but not till he had already shown his prowess, and the triumphant queen had experienced the precarious nature of her success. Edward with a small force marching out of Wales to support his father, was followed by a Lancastrian force under Jasper Tudor, Earl of Pembroke; upon which he suddenly turned, and conquered it on February 2, 1461. It should be noted that Jasper on this, and on later occasions when he was in arms against Edward, escaping by the aid of the Welsh, settled during the rest of Edward's life in France,

became the protector and educator of young Henry Tudor, his nephew, powerfully helped him to the throne, and as Duke of Bedford was of the greatest service to him in putting down the insurrections of his reign. He is one of the "forgotten characters" of history.

A fortnight later, Margaret herself, leading a northern army to London that she might recover her husband from Warwick's keeping in the Tower, decisively conquered the Yorkists at the second battle of St Albans. Her victory over Warwick, who on this occasion did not distinguish himself as a general, was rendered useless by the alarm of the people at the excesses of her lawless troops; and London, incited by Warwick and his brother, invited the young Edward, who was not far off, to enter the city. Margaret was forced to
1461. retreat, and on March 4, 1461, Edward was proclaimed king by a tumultuous gathering of citizens and soldiers. Though not crowned till June 28, the reign dates from this most irregular proclamation. London in fact played again the same part as in the usurpation of Henry IV., but only, it must be said, as prime leader of the nation, which put good government at home and abroad before the hereditary right of an accepted stock. Finding the country under an incompetent Government, while the power of the sword was wielded by a capable man of the Plantagenet blood who could not but govern better, it acquiesced in a usurpation which it had no heart to resist. It might have been different had Margaret herself not become so decidedly unpopular by her furious spirit, and in consequence of the strong suspicions that were justly entertained of her being in league with France and Scotland. It was also very commonly believed that she was an adulteress, a charge wholly unfounded. Her passionate devotion to her husband from first to last ought to have saved her from that imputation; but to betray England to her enemies was simply unpardonable.

CHAPTER X.

EDWARD IV. (1461–1485).

THE battle of Towton near Tadcaster, with the preceding skirmish of Ferry Bridge, definitively settled Edward IV. on the throne. Hurrying to the North with the whole of the Yorkist force, gathering up as they went contingents from many of the chief towns, each under its own banner, Edward and Warwick were met, on March 25, by the Lancastrians in great force, flushed with their victories at Wakefield and St Albans. This was, perhaps, the greatest battle ever fought on English ground. Both sides were desperate; no quarter was asked or given; it was a fair stand-up fight, which, lasting through a whole day and by the light of the moon at night, assumed, if we are to believe the contemporary writers, the dimensions of modern battles, and left on the field some 30,000 Lancastrians and 8000 Yorkists. The difference, however, between this and later battles is that the combatants were brethren. It was best, however, that it should be terrible and decisive. Order and government had become necessary, and the country felt it. Of the battle itself all we can say here is that it was won by the timely arrival of John Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk, with a large body of fresh troops, just when the Lancastrians were tired out and already outgeneralled. The intrenchments at Towton may still be seen. It was no figure of speech that the little river Cock, then in flood, ran red with blood.

But even this defeat did not discourage Margaret, who now disgraced her cause by handing over Berwick to the Scots, selling Calais, provided they could get it, to the French, and obtaining French troops to attack the great northern castles. Edward was unable to recover the great border fortress till the end of his reign; but Lord Montagu, Warwick's brother, drove back some petty inroads from the North, and paralysed the Scots by raising up a rival party of nobles in the West of Scotland. Calais was safe under Warwick's experienced government; and he joined his brother in the recovery of the castles which the French allies of Margaret had taken. In 1464 Montagu gained petty but decisive and final

victories over the last despairing bands of Lancastrians at Hedgley Moor and Hexham.

The two brothers had in short efficiently defended the vulnerable parts of England, the Channel and the Scottish Border, while Edward was enjoying himself. These obligations not unnaturally made the Neville interest, which was before supreme, an intolerable burden to the selfish king. He had established himself with great success upon the throne; parliamentary grants were freely given; the great mass of the Lancastrian nobles had been slain in battle, executed, or reduced to poverty and exile; and the handsome, fascinating, young soldier soon added to the popularity of the York family. But in this very year his romantic marriage with Elizabeth Woodville, daughter of Lord Rivers and his wife Jacquetta of Luxemburg, widow of the great Duke of Bedford, changed the course of his reign. Warwick was actually negotiating a French match for his king when the marriage with Elizabeth commenced the quarrel which eventually destroyed himself and the dynasty he served. Though offensive to the Kingmaker, it was not however an alliance distasteful to the people. They liked the romance, and were glad to see their voluptuous king settled in matrimony; but they still more liked the Burgundian connection, which Edward soon strengthened by marrying his sister Margaret to Charles the Bold; and they were thankful to escape from the French alliance which they hated. The policy which Edward now adopted of raising up amongst the Woodvilles by great marriages a new nobility to balance the old, was by no means a merely uxorious act, but a designed attack upon the Nevilles and their friends.

This policy was further destined to be the first step towards establishing a popular monarchy, the alliance of king and people, supported by subservient lords and officials. The power of the nobles was never again to dominate as in the late struggle, nor the House of Commons to interfere with Government in the manner which had affected the peace of the Lancastrian House. That had indeed been a premature development. Edward's was a military monarchy necessary for the times, strong enough to restore order at home and respect abroad, while all the constitutional forms were still preserved. This was what the country, after the terrible

teaching of the dynastic struggle, desired, and which it was perfectly willing should continue, under the Tudor dynasty, till its work was done. The Wars of the Roses burnt into the political mind of the nation what the conduct of Mary Tudor and James II. indelibly impressed upon its religious instincts. Kings and people understood one another on that point. The succeeding dynasty of the Stuarts failed to read the signs of the times, and over its prostrate form the nation marched to the recovery of its ancient rights and the free working of its balanced Constitution.

But there was in Edward's policy no approximation towards any countenance of the reforming elements of society which had nerved many an arm in the late conflict; and much of the unsettled and mysterious agitation of the reign must be attributed to this cause. The Cardinal Legates of the century, well represented by Archbishop Bourchier, were more successful than the Reformers in claiming their reward for their invaluable service, and, as we have already seen, they lost no time.

The history of France is more than usually bound up with that of England at this period. Charles VII., whose career had been more fortunate than he deserved, was in no condition, after the expulsion of the English, to take advantage of their civil war. The bitter quarrels between him and his son Louis were the retribution for his amours, nor was Louis XI. himself, after he mounted the throne in the same year as Edward IV., at rest for a moment from civil war, or rivalry with his hereditary foe. In 1467 Charles the Bold became Duke of Burgundy, and for ten years, till his death in 1477, kept Louis fully employed. Thus England had during her agony at least the privilege of comparative freedom from open interference. Louis's intrigues, however, were none the less incessant because they were not open. He never trusted the Lancastrians enough to give them any efficient aid during the struggle, but Warwick's quarrel with his pupil-king soon afforded him the opportunity of which he was in search. While the Earl was treacherously conspiring in England, Louis was collecting all the elements of combustion which burst forth in the short-lived English revolution of 1470. His plan was, by the reconciliation of the two great leaders, to paralyse England during his internecine

struggle with Charles. France and Lancaster, with Warwick's aid, were to destroy York and Burgundy. How skilfully he brought the ancient enemies together, and how nearly the plot was successful, was soon to be visible; but the process of the movement in England, of which the following is the outline, is, and will probably remain, obscure.

1467. The King and the Kingmaker begin to make their countermoves in 1467,—Edward in the alliance with Brittany, Castile, and Aragon; Warwick in the league with Clarence, who was equally aggrieved with himself at the elevation of the Woodvilles, and who was to marry Warwick's daughter Isabella; but he himself makes no sign till 1469. Meanwhile some restless Lancastrians begin to stir, studiously unchecked by Warwick's friends, and, encouraged by immunity, are headed by an obscure agent, Robert Hilyard, in open rebellion. Then Warwick's brother, Lord Montagu, is obliged to make a show of loyalty and puts it down, actually executing Hilyard; but as soon as his niece is married at Calais, becomes passive. It was Warwick's position as Captain of Calais and Warden of the Cinque Ports which enabled him to manage all these plots; and he now finds himself strong enough to launch his own relatives against Edward's forces, which had been hastily gathered. This time he succeeded (while not even yet throwing off the mask) in imprisoning the king in Middleham Castle, the stronghold of the Neville family. There he and his brother force Edward to make a promise, as the condition of escape, that his daughter Elizabeth should marry Lord Montagu's son, the heir of the Nevilles. The king, who had thus been caught amidst the toils woven by master hands, no sooner escapes than he finds he has to fight in the open field a Lancastrian force led by Warwick's confederate, Sir Robert Welles. Easily beating it at Stamford, or Lose-coat field, he discovers Warwick's treachery. All reconciliations are now cancelled, and Warwick, accompanied by Clarence, flies in all haste to his command at Calais. There Louis contrives the famous alliance, now at last ripe, embodied in the Treaty of Amboise between himself, Margaret, and Warwick. This appears to have been the course of events.

By this time England itself had begun to side pretty generally with its old favourite Warwick, and so long as he

was at the helm, was willing to retrace its steps in favour of the Lancastrians. There was no liking for the Woodvilles, nor any solid respect for Edward IV. Thus when Warwick and Clarence, well assured of the popular sympathy, land at Dartmouth on September 13, 1470, they meet with no 1470.
opposition, and all but surprise Edward at Doncaster. By a most unexpected turn of fortune the king, so lately triumphant, was now glad to make a precipitate escape to Flanders with a few friends. Henry at once exchanged his prison for the throne; but there was no kingship in the six months' reign of the worn-out and imbecile prince: it was the Kingmaker's Government, and it was necessarily insecure. There was indeed a Parliament, orderly and apparently loyal: there was also clemency in the use of the bloodless victory; but Warwick's career had destroyed all confidence, and the treachery with which he had treated Edward surrounded and menaced himself. The hereditary Yorkists could not forgive his desertion; the hereditary Lancastrians could not forget what they had suffered at his hands.

The office of King's Lieutenant, shared with Clarence, supplied the immediate needs of administration, but made it easier for the latter to intrigue with the absent Edward,—for this was the next turn of affairs. The marriage of the young Prince Edward to Warwick's second daughter, Ann, had thrown Clarence one step further back from the succession than before, and no one ever believed that the sons of Richard Duke of York could look beyond their own interests. His desertion of Warwick was as natural as his desertion of Edward, and his murder at last, under the authority of that brother, was even more natural still. It was the age which we justly call "Machiavellian," of intelligence without principle, of the Italian Renaissance in high places. Happily the English form of the movement, about to unfold itself, was of a different kind. Further,—admired as the Kingmaker was for his popular qualities, grandeur, generosity, eloquence, courage, business-like activity, and accessibility, his party was after all the feudal, anti-commercial, conservative party; while that of Edward was the party of the fast-rising towns, of the "new men" of commerce; and when he had once conquered his foes, this party became too strong for hostile reactions external to its own ranks. The dynasty

might indeed, and did, destroy itself; it could hardly be otherwise. Yorkists and Nevilles alike disappeared with the general destruction of the feudal nobility effected by the Wars of the Roses. The Tudors took care they should never rise again.

These divisions of society had, however, very little to do with Warwick's fall. It was a simple result of circumstances which no one could have foreseen. It would scarcely have been delayed had the unwilling Lancastrians who followed Margaret allowed her to cross the seas in time for the junction of her troops with those of Warwick; for it may well be doubted if they could have been used with effect. Their mutual jealousies and suspicions were too strong. Nor would Edward have succeeded in making his march upon London if he had not committed a gross perjury, like that of Henry IV., in solemnly swearing that he had not come to take arms against the Government; nor unless Clarence had been guilty of the meanest treachery. It was even supposed that Warwick's own brother, Montagu, allowed Edward to pass the army which had been set to watch for him, out of treachery. But if so, he would surely have joined Edward before the battle of Barnet. At any rate, it was there he met his death. Even at the last tragical scene of the King-maker's stormy career, the fog, and the consequent accident of two divisions of his troops mistaking each other for the enemy, seem alone to have given the victory to Edward. It was not to be. Not even the most powerful subject who has appeared in the whole History of England was to retard the onward march of her destiny. Still less was it to be disturbed by the frantic queen and her mongrel allies, whom Edward crushed at Tewkesbury with all the skill, decision, and cruelty for which he was famous. Father and son were at once put out of the way—the hopeful young prince at Tewkesbury, the tired pilgrim in the Tower. It is characteristic of the times that we do not know exactly how it was done; but whoever was the agent, Edward was no doubt responsible.

Nothing now stood between the best general in Europe, the brave, successful, unprincipled king, and his subjects, whose ideas and prejudices he so well knew how to humour and represent. All felt him to be at least English, and when he entered upon the war with France in 1475, he was

doing what was expected of him. France should be properly punished for her recent interference by one who would at last, under the old alliance with Burgundy and Brittany, more than renew the glories of Crécy and Agincourt. Who can doubt that he had wrongs enough to avenge? But a more astute prince than Philip VI. or Charles VII. was on the throne of France, and he knew how to use his replenished coffers so as to make Edward's alliances useless. Charles the Bold, more properly "the Rash," was easily checkmated in his grand designs by the subtle Louis XI., who raised up against him the Lorrainers, the Swiss, and the Emperor; and they held him fast. Each had his fears of the reckless prince, and each his grievances. If the allied attack had succeeded, of which there was every prospect, Charles was to have been king of north-eastern France, Edward of the rest. As it was, Edward found himself with the finest army which had ever yet left English shores, deserted in the midst of France, with winter coming on, and no prospect of English reinforcements. Like the clever man he was, Edward determined to withdraw as soon as he could, and with as much spoil as possible. This also suited Louis, whose troops, however numerous, were, he knew, little able to stand before Edward and his veterans. With a good commercial treaty, an annual tribute, a good sum paid down, and the promise of the dauphin in marriage with his daughter, what could the English king have done better? It is idle to depreciate those conditions, or to condemn the mode of proceeding. He had strengthened his questionable title to the English throne, and even the discontent with which his failure to conquer France was received by the vulgar had a good effect. It suggested to Edward that he would be wise to substitute indirect for direct taxation, and to increase his customs by developing his commerce, which also enriched his privy purse. 1475.

Thus it came to pass that a Government of extreme vigilance and occasional severity, without the startling qualities which excite admiration, became a popular monarchy, magnificent without much taxation, orderly in a bureaucratic sense, secure in its domestic peace, and with a good reputation abroad. So also governed the Tudors, for whom Edward paved the way.

1478. The death of Clarence, whose mean nature and turbulent character diminish our compassion for his fate, and the war with Scotland, distinguish the later years of the reign. Richard of Gloucester, a good soldier like his brother, patiently biding his time, had a brilliant success, recovering Berwick, capturing Edinburgh, and avenging on the Scots the aid they had given to Margaret. To this he owed the army with which, on his brother's death, he seized the crown. Painful disease, the result of debauchery and of the fury with which Edward received the news that Louis had repudiated the promised marriage, carried off the licentious king in the flower of his age; and the final tragedy now opens on the House of York. He could not but have had some presentiment of it; for no one knew Richard better. Assuredly he did not escape retribution any more than other guilty actors on this tragic stage.

CHAPTER XI.

EDWARD V. (1483) AND RICHARD III. (1483–1485).

THE time has not yet arrived, if it ever does, when we can speak with anything like positive certainty as to the mysterious proceedings which resulted in the accession of Richard III., and soon afterwards in the establishment of the Tudor dynasty. The general failure of historical literature in that century has been noticed; and if we add to this difficulty the suppression of evidence which it was in the power of the successful Tudors to effect, it is plain that a large field is left open for the exercise of ingenuity in supplying plausible interpretations of such facts as are beyond dispute. The vast mass of historians from that day to this have accepted the account of Richard's career which has been immortalised by Shakespeare, and which he and Lord Bacon, in common with the Elizabethan chroniclers, received, through Sir Thomas More, from Archbishop Morton, from Alderman Fabyan, from the Continuator of

Croyland, and other contemporary writers of less importance. To stem this tide of historical belief might appear quixotic, and is at least an arduous enterprise. Nevertheless, it has been attempted by more than one writer of reputation, especially on the point of Richard III.'s character, and of the want of proof concerning his alleged crimes, and these views have generally been held in connection with the defence of the Yorkist claims. It will therefore be best, while reserving our judgment upon unproved statements, to piece together the known facts in the order of their occurrence. This will, at least, open out the consideration of *cui bono*, which, in default of evidence, carries weight.

Much of the argument on both sides has been founded on presumptions derived from character; but this character is itself no small part of the difficulty. We can, however, avoid the usual vice of begging the question by means of strong adjectives, which is rather a gross means of prejudicing the reader. Thus on the one hand we will dismiss the legends which report Richard's portentous birth and uncomely shape, as well as his share in the murder of Henry VI., Henry's son, the young Prince Edward, and the Duke of Clarence, his own elder brother. If suspicions, founded on statements not to be despised, remain, let them go for no more than they are worth. On the other hand, the admitted facts show that we are in contact with an ambitious, resolute, and unscrupulous man, a good soldier, general, and statesman, the prop of the Yorkist House from his early youth, trusted in matters of private property while his family were in power, and the maker of good laws during his brief tenure of the crown.

When Edward IV. died on April 9, 1483, his little son Edward was proclaimed king on the same day in London. Richard was in Yorkshire at the head of his army, and the boy at Ludlow Castle under the guardianship of his mother's relations. In an instant the contest which the Kingmaker had waged against the House of Woodville was once more renewed, but under very different conditions. The strong king who had won his cause and theirs was dead, and his young children were powerless in the presence of Richard, the one man who wielded, and knew how to wield, the military force of the nation. The issue might, however,

have been at least deferred, had not fortune favoured Richard in the race for the possession of the young king's person. At the moment, Lord Hastings and his friends were governing the Council in London, and they had no more idea of a Woodville Regency than they had of making Richard king. Prince Edward was to be king, and, as usual in similar cases, Richard to be Protector. It was the obvious and legal course. Thus it was by them that the order was issued which proved the boy's death-warrant, that he should be attended by a sufficient guard, but on no account by an army. They were reckoning without one who was determined to be master.

Richard, without the delay of an hour, rushed from the north to intercept his nephew coming from the west, treacherously seized his guardians, who came at his own request to meet him, and despatched them at once to the north that they might await their trial. He himself now escorted the young king to London with all outward marks of respect, and lodged him in the Tower. His army followed by detachments, and soon London was virtually occupied by a large body of the veteran troops whom he had so long commanded. He arrived on May 4. Three days previously the queen-mother, with the little Duke of York and her daughters, justly alarmed at Richard's proceedings, had taken sanctuary at Westminster. The Coronation, which had been fixed for May 4, was put off by Richard to June 22; and now begins the rapid series of events which as yet defy exact analysis. We cannot, however, be wrong in so far interpreting Richard's position under the above circumstances as one in which his presence must have struck terror into the hearts of the Londoners, including in that term along with the citizens such prelates, nobles, and gentry as were there. It had already been shown how dangerous it was to assume an attitude of independence. If before Richard had been placed in authority he had struck hard and displayed his power to strike harder still, what might be expected in the future?

A fortnight elapses, and a "Great Council of prelates, nobles, and chief London citizens" makes the Duke Protector and Defensor of the king and kingdom, Great Chamberlain, Constable, and Lord High Admiral of Eng-

land. Armed with this practically regal authority, and allied with the Duke of Buckingham, the most important nobleman of the day, since he was next in blood to himself after Lady Margaret, wife of Lord Stanley, he summoned Parliament for June 25. In the meantime, through the baseness of Archbishop Rotherham, the queen-mother had been persuaded to hand over the little Duke of York to Richard's keeping, and the two boys were now secured in the Tower. The well-known scene in the Council occurred just before this last event, the arrest of Hastings, Stanley, Morton, and Rotherham, the sudden and tragical nature of which is not denied. Evidence has come to light which seems to show that Hastings was not put to death for a week, nor without trial. Whether anything came out to justify the execution we know not. There had been abundance of ground for quarrel. Richard had been holding private councils of his own at his mother's house, and she, the inveterate enemy of the Woodvilles, is credited with having instigated him to declare the young king and his brother illegitimate on the ground of Edward's precontract with Lady Eleanor Butler, the non-publication of banns at the marriage with Elizabeth Woodville, and the sorcery of Jacquetta of Luxemburg. The Council was likely enough, in the absence of Richard, to suspect his designs; and there may well have been a conspiracy to seize the Protector before he could attack them. If so, they were not quick enough. He struck first, and thus removed out of his path the experienced soldier and statesman who alone was really dangerous. On the other hand, it was plainly politic of Richard to receive back Lord Stanley to favour, if only to exhibit himself on friendly terms with his wife; for it was important that she should not publicly discountenance the step he was next about to take.

It is in relation to this next step that Richard's apologists find one of their chief difficulties. Up to this time they represent him as an injured man, establishing his just authority. But how about his claim to the Crown, which he now, and not till now, founds on the alleged illegitimacy of his brother's children? The dates are very suggestive. On June the 13th Hastings was seized, on the 20th executed. On the 16th the young Duke of York was safely lodged in

the Tower. On the 22d a sermon is preached setting forth the illegitimacy of the children, and, inasmuch as Clarence's children were attainted, the claim of Richard as next heir; on the 24th Buckingham addresses the citizens of London to the same purpose. On the 25th Lord Rivers, the only other capable defender of the boys, is executed, along with Sir Richard Grey, after a trial of which we know nothing; and on the same day certain London citizens, along with some members of Parliament, irregularly assembled, invite Richard to accept the Crown. On the 26th he accepts it, is enthroned at Westminster Abbey, and rides in state to St Paul's. On July 6 he and Anne, his wife, are crowned. No regular Parliament authorised these proceedings. A summons had been issued, but very suspiciously countermanded about the time when Richard made the claim to the Crown. His troops had full possession of the city.

It seems impossible to imagine a sequence of events, undisputed events, which would more exactly fit in with a usurpation under terror, and an unscrupulous destruction of every obstacle which stood in the way. The ratification of these proceedings by the Parliament which assembled in January 1484 cannot be held to make a serious difference in the presentation of the case, any more than we can allow ourselves to close our eyes to the politic motives which would suggest to the usurper a series of good measures for the express purpose of making his parliamentary legislation popular. The stately progress to the north, the visit to Oxford, the gracious acts on the route, the regal ceremonies at York, were consummately calculated to attract favour.

The method of encountering this simple aspect of the case is to insist upon Richard's guileless ignorance of his brother's precontract with Lady Eleanor Butler, and his sudden enlightenment by Bishop Stillington's appearance at the Council, where he disclosed the secret. It would be too horrible that a bastard should mount the throne, and all the measures described above are pronounced to be the obvious and righteous modes of preventing a scandal and catastrophe. At the same time we are told that the Duke of Clarence met his fate in the previous reign because he had maliciously used his knowledge of the secret marriage between Edward IV. and Lady Eleanor; but if so, it is impossible but that

Richard must have known it also; and indeed, whatever might be the truth as to the precontract or marriage, the theory that the charge of illegitimacy was the result of a sudden and conscientious conviction, demands an amount of credulity quite beyond anything required for the received account handed down as described above. That the authorities for that account may have given certain wrong dates is one of the obscure parts of the subject, and should put us on our guard; but if the character of writers is to guarantee in any degree their credibility, it is certain that Morton proved himself in the next reign a man of high character, notwithstanding the murmurs which were heard from taxpayers. Further, we must remember that Bishop Stillington's convenient appearance before the Council has always been reckoned a very suspicious circumstance; nor does his record of character prevent us from believing that it was quite possible that he might, under pressure of the terror, have been no more courageous than the two archbishops who behaved with so much opportune servility. But let us, for argument's sake, grant that the boys were bastards,—what can be said for the man who had publicly accepted the office of their protector, judging his own cause against helpless infants instead of solemnly placing it before the nation? What for his consigning them to a prison from whence, whether he murdered them or not, they never emerged?

This it was which stirred the nation to its depths. As soon as ever the awful pressure was removed from the south of England, noblemen, gentry, and people began to recover from their first surprise; plots of all kinds were in the air, and Buckingham, instigated no doubt by Morton, who had been placed under his charge, prematurely rose in rebellion. He was instantly put down and executed; but under Morton's skilful management the general alarm took form in the movement to support Henry Tudor as the avenger of the outraged nation. Besides that this is the account of contemporaries, it is impossible to imagine a revolt which so rapidly assumed national dimensions to have been fed by mere dynastic opposition, or supplied with fuel by the exertions of one man who was soon obliged to fly the country, Bishop Morton. Its overt acts could only have been, in the presence of Richard and his army, the result of exceedingly strong and general

sentiment. Thus it broke out again in spite of apparently complete suppression. It never really stopped. The tide rolled on till it submerged the army, which was faithful at first, and left Richard to the feeble support of a few devoted friends who had been his secret counsellors, and their immediate retainers.

According to the received narrative, Richard III. determined to break up the conspiracy by putting the two boys to death. This has never been proved; but that, in the nature of the case, was almost impossible. On the other hand, the arguments used by Lingard have never been disproved. The rumour which obtained currency is alleged to have been spread by Morton, and by him carried to France. It was certainly stated there in public, and Comines simply reports: "Richard had the princes killed in the Tower." The suspicion must have gathered force from the fact that they were never produced, a circumstance very unsatisfactorily excused by the Parliament (of January 1484) having declared them illegitimate, and so made their life or death no longer a matter of consequence to the king. It was a matter of the highest consequence, nothing less than life or death to himself. And it is at least very difficult to get over the fact that Richard rewarded the persons who, in his successor's reign, were declared to be the murderers. As for the Queen Dowager's conduct in keeping on good terms with one who was reported to have made away with her sons, no great stress can be laid upon it, since her weakness in placing the younger one in his hands after his seizure of the elder, and her after conduct in promoting the incestuous marriage of Elizabeth her daughter with her uncle Richard, suggest that extreme poverty and the restraints of Sanctuary were too much for the virtue of both parent and child. The letter of the latter on the subject is extant, and, of course, involves the initiative of the king. That his wife was still alive, though in ill-health, and that she died just at the time when it was convenient that she should disappear, suggested the charge of a further murder to those who already believed the worst, and who reflected that Richard's only legitimate son had died a year before. At any rate, it accelerated the catastrophe. It was felt that the marriage at all hazards must be prevented, and the best means of preventing it appeared to be that Henry Tudor

should be proposed for her hand. It thus became a race between the two suitors, and Henry won. Leading men of different parties now gathered round the invader (whose first attempt had signally failed), both abroad and after he landed in Wales. The march of his little army against Richard soon became a triumphal procession; the great nobles of the North and West declared in his favour as soon as it was at all safe to do so; and the battle of Bosworth sealed the doom of the bloody House of York.

It is scarcely necessary to notice the attempt which has been ingeniously made to fix the murder of the young princes on Henry VII. If presumptions fail to afford certainty against Richard, much more do they fail in the case of Henry, who spent half his reign in defending his Crown, and yet was never, so far as we know, accused of the crime. No supposed suppression of evidence, no spreading of false reports, no supposed dictation to hired chroniclers, can account for the universal silence. Nor need we seek further reason for the delay of five months which intervened between Henry's accession and his marriage to Elizabeth of York, or the still longer delay of her Coronation, than his well-known reluctance to avow that he held his crown by a Yorkist title. It does indeed surpass belief that he should only have waited to marry the sister till he had contrived to murder her brothers; still more that she should have no suspicion of it when done; for such secrets could hardly be kept from a wife for a life-time, and could not but have been divulged to some one. Henry's treatment of his wife's mother forms a slender ground for the accusation, and his execution at later dates of members of the Yorkist House may fairly be considered the distinct consequence of the persistent insurrections which centred round their persons.[1] 1485.

With the Yorkist Plantagenets the Middle Ages end. The Tudors begin Modern History on a stage prepared for them by their predecessors. They begin at a critical moment for the history of the world, and proved to be peculiarly well fitted for their part. Let us, now that we have advanced towards

[1] The latest defence of Richard III. has been made by Mr Clements Markham, and answered by Mr Gairdner: see the 'English Historical Review' of April, July, and October 1891.

the end of the fifteenth century, take note of the condition of Europe when their period commences.

While England had been working out her destiny in a series of revolutions, which, by carrying off her feudal nobility, saved her from such a catastrophe as the French Revolution of 1789, the Continental States were, each and all, consolidating their separate provinces, and becoming political units. Considering that the last feeble barriers to the progress of the Ottoman Turks had been swept away, and that Crusades were evidently out of date, it was high time. The new comers had stolen into Europe while its feudal organisation was breaking up, the modern monarchies as yet unformed, and the Papacy imbecile. They had now to be reckoned with as a part of Europe.

The consolidation of France had been growing rapidly under Charles VII. and Louis XI. Charles was about to incorporate Brittany, which had long been showing signs of feebleness. Germany, under Maximilian, was at last obtaining a long-needed organisation of her numerous independent States, by means of the division into Circles. Spain, by a series of unions,—that of Castile and Aragon in 1479; the annexation of Sicily and Naples, brought about by the agency of the "Great Captain" in 1500; the recovery of Granada from the Moors, chiefly by the high spirit of Isabella of Castile; and by the gift of the New World from Columbus,—had become the greatest Power in Europe. The Popes, no longer imperial, had become Italian princes, and were already teaching on the smaller scale of Italy the lesson of the Balance of Power which it fell to the Tudor Henry VIII. and the Tudor Elizabeth to organise into a great European system.

Henry VII.'s reign had pointed out the work which England had to perform amongst the nations; the questions already vital amongst individuals and sections had become evidently national, and by the time Henry VIII. had come to maturity the English people were content to trust him, and Elizabeth after him, with exceptional powers, so long as the Continental States were balanced against one another, and their own island rendered safe from foreign interference. We are now to watch the able exercise of those powers by the Tudors, the incompetence of the Stuarts to use them, the restoration of suspended rights by means of the Great

Rebellion, the disdain of the country, when it recovered from the effects of civil war, for Cromwellianism on the one side and a disgraceful subservience to "Popery and wooden shoes" on the other,—till the harmony of religion and politics was at length secured by the bloodless Revolution of 1688. In the third and final portion of this survey we shall trace the beneficent action of Party Government, revived, under the later Stuarts, from the days of an earlier and premature experience, and proving itself to be the one only method by which the order of a civilised, and the freedom of a free, nation can be permanently secured.

There was also a remarkable fitness of things in Henry Tudor's coming to the throne of England and founding a dynasty at the precise moment when England herself was ripe for her own peculiar development of the Renaissance. He received a better education in France than he was at all likely to have obtained in England under the pressure of war and revolution; and his practical knowledge of French and of continental affairs gave him a great advantage not only in political combinations, but in assisting England to emerge from her literary insularity. His zeal for the higher education propagated itself in his family,—for his descendants were about the best educated persons of their generation; and it was in full harmony with the vast improvements which were taking place at the Universities. In his time classical Latin, which had been taking root amongst the abler men in the middle of the century, came to be matched with the Greek which Grocyn, Linacre, and William Latimer taught at Oxford to Colet, More, and Erasmus. At the same time the strongly religious side of the English Renaissance, which distinguished it so happily from that of Italy, was in no small degree stimulated by the grave and serious, if somewhat gloomy, character of the first Tudor and his court. We are apt to lose sight of these favourable aspects of the new dynasty in the evil report of Henry's occasional severity, his subtle policy, and the avarice of his later days, the tyranny of his son, the cruelties of Mary, and the frivolities of Elizabeth. And yet it is in reality the strongest of all our dynasties. With all their faults they, for the most part, did the work assigned them well.

But to some considerable extent the early Tudors labour

under the same disadvantage as their immediate predecessors in the fifteenth century. From the causes already mentioned, and still as yet in operation, there is no contemporary history worth the name. But Henry VII. was at least fortunate in having his life written by Bacon, though more than a century after his death. We should expect the great founder of modern Philosophy to rise above the level of the ordinary chronicler, and his work does not disappoint us; for it is not excelled, as the life of a single king, by any history we possess. Here we find for the first time the springs of action of each actor on the stage laid bare; and making allowance for the impossibility in Bacon's age of measuring such influences as that of the Renaissance, he leaves us with the pleasing conviction that we are for once safely guided by the hand of a master. Almost the same thing may be said of Henry VIII. and Lord Herbert of Cherbury, his biographer.

CHAPTER XII.

HENRY VII.

HENRY'S dislike to encourage the idea that he owed his throne to the union of the two Roses was natural. It was only when the discontent of the Yorkists at the delay of his marriage showed itself in the first insurrection that he moved in the matter. He placed his claim to the throne in the first place on his Lancastrian descent; next, on the choice of the people expressed in Parliament. Both of these he wisely put forward rather than any title gained by victory at Bosworth. To these he added the Papal Bull, and finally his union with Elizabeth. If he could have foreseen that fifteen years of his reign were to be harassed by Yorkist insurrections under the guidance of Lovel, the De la Poles, and Margaret of Burgundy, he might have acted differently. After the long supremacy of that faction there could not but be a multitude of channels by which the throne could be assailed. Nothing but his untiring vigilance and courage,

his careful economy, and sagacious choice of ministers throughout his reign could have carried him safely through those troubles.

Dividing the reign into two parts by the year 1500, when the insurrections cease, we naturally contrast the reign with that of Henry IV., which commenced the century, and was divided in the same manner. The first Lancastrian indeed found himself, in the time of his trouble, reduced to impotence by the gathered forces of Parliament which had been accumulating during the previous century, and was obliged to endure the insults of France; the first Tudor, succeeding to the military monarchy of Edward IV., under which Parliaments were practically in abeyance, found himself able to invade the French shores like Henry V. and Edward IV. They were, however, alike in being able to spend the calmer portion of their reign in preparing the way for the great place their sons were each to take up in the history of the world. Each established his position by a compact with the heads of the clergy, and owed much of his security to their aid. Hence the depression of the reforming party all through the century, and the permanence of its success when the repressing hand of the clergy was at last removed, and an irrepressible reaction had taken place. The courage, energy, and promptitude of the two kings in dealing with insurrections were much alike; but while Henry IV. was the open-handed knight who had spent his turbulent life on the steps of the throne, Henry VII. never lost the taint of his education under exile and poverty. He is the only one of the series of our sovereigns who has left behind him the stigma of avarice, yet we cannot but honour the economy which at least diminished taxation; and after all, the system of Morton and Fox, called "Morton's fork," was substantially the income-tax of modern times, levied in the only shape then possible. To these grave and reverend ministers was due the marriage of James IV. with Margaret, which produced in due course the union of England with Scotland.

Just as some have been able to discover a hero in Richard III., so even Perkin Warbeck has found some in modern times to support his claim to be the murdered Duke of York. The evidence to the contrary is as complete as the nature of the case admits, but it may be held that no king

has ever been plagued for so long a time with an impostor who showed himself so personally incapable. He need only be noticed in this sketch inasmuch as the persistence of Henry's enemies in his favour was the direct cause of the hasty conclusion of the Peace of Etaples in 1492. It is under Bacon's guidance that we learn to measure the true import of the invasion thus concluded, in which Henry was said to have "taxed his subjects for war, and his enemies for peace,"—a phrase as misleading as many such popular expressions of discontent, and quite as applicable to the politic Peace of Pecquigny.

It was not a mere personal interest in the fate of Brittany which led Henry to support its Duke in various ways against the movement for annexation which had characterised the whole reign of Charles VIII., under the policy commenced by Anne of Beaujeu. With France it was a politic attempt to place the last stone of French consolidation, and remove the danger which was always impending from the alliance between England and the Duchy. With England it was a settled political principle that the claims of the English "King of France" could alone be successfully prosecuted by the union of the three Powers,—Burgundy, Brittany, and England. From Calais in the centre, an advance on Paris could always be made if the wings were protected on either side; but still more useful were they as a means of defence from French aggression. Morton's famous speech to Parliament as Chancellor in 1488 is luminous on this point. He shows how necessary it was to spend money and life to preserve this almost united front against the hereditary enemy, for thus alone had England hitherto escaped the fatal consequences which would otherwise have attended the loss of her French provinces. She would now lie bare and unprotected. In this speech we also find the earliest expression of the doctrine of Balance of Power, which avowedly guided Europe for three centuries, and practically, under other names, guides it still. We also find a noteworthy use of the term "Imperial" for English dominion, and a truly English jealousy for the supremacy of the Royal Navy.

When, however, Anne, Duchess of Brittany, had been carried off from her betrothed husband, Maximilian, King of

the Romans, by Charles VIII.—a process, as the aggrieved king said, of mixed adultery and rape—Henry only represented the nation in making his invasion. The tribute levied by Edward IV. had been long unpaid; English rebels had been openly supported; and now the ancient ally of the English had been finally overwhelmed. Again, like Edward at the Peace of Pecquigny, Henry obtained a substantial return for his enterprise by the Peace of Etaples, and sound policy 1492.
dictated that Peace. The French, just as eager as before to avoid a battle, were glad to renew the tribute, which was paid not only to Henry, but to his son afterwards; and what was of still more consequence, they engaged to keep Warbeck out of France. It was by the desertion of Spain, and still more by the hostility of Duchess Margaret, that Henry's combination of forces on the frontiers of France turned out to be as weak as Edward's alliance had previously proved to be through Charles the Bold's enforced absence on the Rhine. He soon found means, however, to punish Margaret, and exclude Warbeck from Flanders by stopping the exportation of English wool, on which the Flemish looms depended. His subsequent Treaty of reconciliation in 1496, called the 1496.
Intercursus Magnus, obtains an important place in the history of a reign which shows many marks of commercial progress. It may be called a Treaty of Free Trade, both as to commerce and fishing, and must be distinguished from the Intercursus Malus, forced upon Flanders when Henry, in 1505, unworthily took advantage of the storm which drove 1505.
Philip the Handsome, at that time ruler of the Netherlands, on English shores.

Excluded from France, Flanders, Scotland, and Ireland, Warbeck made his last effort at the head of the irrepressible Cornishmen, who had already risen against Henry's taxes in 1497 under obscure leaders, but who were defeated at Blackheath without much difficulty. These he basely deserted as soon as danger appeared, just as he had previously allowed his friends to land at Deal without himself incurring danger. He now surrendered on condition of his life being spared; but having been discovered in a plot to escape along with the Earl of Warwick, both were executed. The fate of the latter, the last Plantagenet in male descent, has always been considered open to the charge of political murder. If

so, it is the one case in a reign otherwise just, and generally merciful. Henry was certainly much less severe upon the so-called "heretics" than might have been expected from a man who had no sympathy with them; preferring to deal with them "rather by penances than by fire."

Perhaps of all the important consequences which issued from Warbeck's sustained imposture, the settlement of Ireland stands first. Few of Henry's excellent ministers did him better service than Sir Edward Poynings, who found it impossible to deal with the machinations of the Irish Yorkists without wholly fresh powers. "Poynings' Act" of 1495, by which the laws of England and Ireland were made from that date identical, forms the chief epoch of Irish history since its annexation by Henry II., and, together with other parts of the Statute of Drogheda, it set that country on a new career, thus placing Henry VII. third on the list of kings, after John and Richard II., who brought Ireland under a settled rule. Still it was the "Pale" only which was directly affected. Henry VIII. and Elizabeth, working on those foundations, reduced the whole Irish people at last to the English obedience.

The prosperous period of Henry's reign, dating from
1500. 1500, is marked by his busy diplomacy, generally tortuous, and by his ever-growing propensity to increase his hoard by means of base agents, such as Empson and Dudley, whose names have become a by-word. With regard to the first propensity, it must be noted that diplomacy and international law were novelties; ambassadors had not begun to reside regularly at courts; and we see in the despatches of Henry and his ministers the crude beginnings of what soon came to be shrouded from the public eye. The only important outcome of his many attempts to build up the English government in close relation with the rising power of the age, the Spain of the "Catholic Kings," is the marriage of Arthur, his eldest son, who was born on September 20, 1486, with Catherine of Aragon, fifth child of Ferdinand and Isabella, who was born in December 1485, and, therefore, nine months older than her husband. She was not quite sixteen years old when they were married on November 14, 1501, and he fifteen years and two months. On April 2, 1502, he died, the young couple having lived together as

husband and wife four and a half months in Ludlow Castle. These dates become of vast importance in after times. It has been thought that the over-education of which the prince was a victim had something to do with his early death, but there is little doubt that he died suddenly of the plague, then raging in the neighbourhood.

On the problem whether this was a real or only a nominal marriage depend, or was supposed to depend, many others which concerned the history of Europe: the legitimacy of Henry VIII.'s subsequent marriage in 1509 with Catherine; the question of the need of a divorce which should enable him to marry Ann Boleyn; and the legitimacy of Queen Elizabeth. That doubts existed at the time is shown by the suspension of any proceedings as to the dowry till it was certain there would be no issue, and by Henry's protest, when the second betrothal took place, registered as a means of escape from the contract when it should have served his purpose. The honourable course would certainly have been to return the young wife and her rich dowry to her parents; but to restore the money was too great a sacrifice for Henry, and Ferdinand clung to the English alliance as against France. And so matters drifted on till the betrothal to the boy Henry took place in 1504, when the Pope's Dispensation was held to cover all defects. But even the subsequent Bull of Julius II. deliberately expressed a doubt whether the first marriage had not been a real one after all. When Henry VII. was dead, his ministers and the young king agreed that it was best to swallow the scruple, and rest on the Dispensation; but the Treaty of marriage distinctly acknowledged Catherine as having been the real wife of the elder brother.

This was the view which prevailed at last, and set Henry free. Even Thomas Aquinas had decreed that a Papal Dispensation could not annul a divine command. Thus, as there had been no marriage and no sacrament at Henry's union with Catherine, no divorce was required; and the National Ecclesiastical Courts could annul it. The Pope had no concern with it whatever. The opposite view was naturally taken by the rigid Papists, and by the enemies of England generally. The conduct of Henry VIII., though he probably always felt scruples, and especially when no

male issue survived, is none the less, after what had taken place, dishonourable; and his corrupt motives shock our moral sense, but they should not obscure the facts which had their origin in the time of Henry VII.

The marks of commercial progress may conclude our sketch. The foundation of the new English Company of Merchant Adventurers, in spite of the difficulties raised by the London branch of the Hanse Confederacy, was the natural outcome of the movements which had been encouraged largely by Edward IV.; and it was to some extent forced upon Henry. The Easterlings, or German Merchants of the Steelyard, who had for centuries formed this branch, had been extremely useful in protecting during its infancy, and developing, foreign trade; but they had done their work, and had become obstructive and unpopular. Their immense privileges dwarfed the enterprise of the English; and the bribes by which Henry was induced to support them did not recommend them to those who were aggrieved. Like the Jews of an earlier date they found it worth while to make almost any sacrifice to keep their lucrative hold on English commerce, and, indeed, they retained a good deal of it till the reign of Edward VI. Henry at the same time encouraged English shipping by protective laws, and twice granted new commissions for the "discovery and investment of new lands." It was not his fault that England did not take the place of Spain in the New World, but it was well that she did not. The loyalty of the Cinque Ports was signally exhibited, but their place as a Royal Navy was being gradually superseded by the growth of distant commerce and the construction of larger men-of-war, built to carry large guns.

An account of Henry's famous Law of Treasons, which absolved from punishment the adherence to a *de facto* king, and the beneficent influence of the Court of the Star Chamber, afterwards so sadly abused, as well as excellent remarks on the profound character of Henry's laws, may be read in Bacon. We have before us a great king, a real founder of a dynasty, though deficient in amiable qualities. We are not to blame him for not having restored the full constitutional government of the fourteenth century. He had inherited the conditions under which England had been

left by the events of the fifteenth century, and he interpreted rightly the wishes of his people under the circumstances. That was very much the position of his successors, always excepting the unhappy Mary, whose death alone appears to have saved her from deposition.

CHAPTER XIII.

HENRY VIII.—PART I.: 1509–1526.

INFERIOR in every respect to Edward I., it may well be questioned if even the greatest of English sovereigns left so large a personal mark upon the nation as that impressed upon it by Henry VIII. Like Edward he entered upon public life as a young man of remarkable power and many accomplishments. He wanted, however, that teaching of adversity which profoundly affected Edward's character; while the dangers and discipline of a soldier's career were, as a training of character, infinitely superior to the athletic sports and mimic war in which Henry carried off the palm. Nor had Henry the advantage enjoyed by Edward in the tutorship and example of St Louis of France. But not even did the Greatest of the Plantagenets excel Henry in public spirit and devotion to kingly work. Deteriorating though we find him too soon from the good, generous, and even pious character with which he started, it was this industry and public spirit which fitted Henry for the task left for him to take up, and which, on the whole, he performed.

What was that task? It may be stated briefly thus: (1) To restore England, in her relations to foreign Powers, if not by conquest, then by leadership and balance of power, to the position which had been held by most of the Norman and Plantagenet sovereigns. This course had been marked out for him by his father, who had replaced his country in at least a second-rate position amongst the continental nations; his son raised it once again to the first rank. (2) To reduce to a healthy condition the ecclesiastical body,

which had swollen since the Conquest to a most diseased and dangerous magnitude under the Papal headship; (3) To re-establish the National Church on the basis of the Royal Supremacy, through the joint operation of King, Council, Parliament, and Clergy, and in a condition fairly representative of the progress which had been made since the Renaissance by the educated portion of the nation. Of that portion the towns and the trading classes generally had now become the leaders. We must necessarily select a few chief lines of progress in this great and closely packed reign, for we are dealing with what should be called "the Age of Henry VIII.," rather than with the reign of an ordinary king.

It will make our view of the reign more distinct if we take it in three parts: (1) 1509–1526, The simply political part, which we connect with the name of Wolsey. This is marked by acquiescence in the Papal system and medieval corruptions of Christian doctrine. (2) 1526–1535, The part characterised by the religious struggle, during which the destruction of the old medieval relations with the Papacy is effected. It ends with the execution of More and Fisher. (3) The part, from 1536 to 1547, during which the Bible is authoritatively circulated, the monasteries dissolved, and reconstructive measures for public worship and popular instruction taken. The concluding years of the reign are also marked by an enforced suspension of the strife, an Eirenicon written in blood, but which gave time for the principles of the Reformation to mature till the country was ripe for the completion of the work under Edward VI. Thus came about the temporary establishment of what may be called the Henrician system, which differed from the Humanist reformation by establishing or re-establishing the Royal Supremacy, but stopped short of the Edwardian and Elizabethan reformation inasmuch as it still held fast to the cardinal deviations of the medieval Church from primitive doctrine. The removal of gross abuses, the dispersion of the supporters of those abuses, and the official circulation of the English Bible, insured the steady operation of causes which could but end in *the Reformation*, as we now understand the word. The nearest approach to that final settlement, which was the consummation of some forty years of strife, had been foreshadowed by Wiclif and his immediate friends, before ecclesi-

1509–1526.

1526–1535.

1536–1547.

astical persecution generated from out of their ranks the debased forms of Lollardism. This is not to say that the undercurrents still flowing on from the great movement did not materially aid the later Reformation, or at least tend to make it irrevocable. As Erasmus tells us: "The Wicliffites in England were put down, but the fire smouldered."

There is no more superficial way of accounting for the Reformation than to deduce it from some one feature of Henry's reign, such as the divorce from Catherine, or the influence of the "Gospel light which flashed from Bullen's eyes," or the mere tyrannical will of the king. It was the inevitable outcome of a long past, the resultant of a multitude of concurrent causes. The circumstances of the great continental struggle between the newly organised and strongly governed States, of which the battle-ground was Italy, commencing just when Henry arrived at manhood, and continuing to the end of what we call here the political period of his reign, had the greatest influence on the course of events. Under Wolsey's tortuous guidance Henry, full of grand designs, came to be thoroughly mixed up with continental politics, learnt how far each of the Powers was formidable or the reverse, and imbibed that personal contempt for the corrupt and degraded Papacy, which issued in his breach with Rome. Out of these shifting politics came, in the course of time, intimate relations with the new Protestant States of Germany, and the door was opened for that further interchange of ideas which coloured the end of his reign, and, as soon as he was dead, affected that of his son. We must therefore set the reign in a European framework.

Italy had, by the end of the fifteenth century, reaped the fruit of her unwarlike civilisation, her exclusive employment of mercenary *condottieri*, her wealth, her effeminacy, her immersion in the pursuits of art and literature, but, above all, of her unhappy division into petty States, her unworthy Papacy, and the general decay of honourable principles. The Renaissance had brought light, but in her case had lowered still further the standard of Christianity. She was therefore a fit quarry for the comparatively barbarous French, Spaniards, Germans, and Swiss, each of which had almost suddenly started on a national race for military greatness. The ferocious raid of Charles VIII. in 1494 had betrayed 1494.

1500. the feebleness of Italy to her greedy neighbours, and in 1500, by the "Infernal Compact of Grenada," France and Spain agreed to share the Peninsula between them. Gonsalvo de Cordova, the "Great Captain," secured the southern portion for Spain; France seized the Milanese and Genoese territories of the north, but she had to share the Venetian provinces in Italy with Maximilian, leaving Tuscany and the Papal States alone independent.

The Venetian Empire was, however, too attractive to be let alone. The League of Cambray, formed by the old soldier-Pope Julius II. with the French and Germans in
1508. 1508, was pressing it hard, when the Pope was suddenly seized with a patriotic fit, changed his policy, and formed the "Holy League," which placed the youthful Henry at its head, for the purpose of driving the French out of Italy. The English were influenced by the hope of recovering Gascony; Spain, Venice, and the Swiss had their own reasons. France averted her fate for a short time under her youthful hero, Gaston de Foix, but was soon expelled. By that time unhappy Italy found she had exchanged her chief tyrant, the first offender, only to groan under three others, the Spaniards, the Germans, and the Swiss. These now proceeded, like vampires, to suck her blood. The English gained nothing but ridicule; for the wily Ferdinand simply made use of Henry's army to keep the French in check, while he conquered their portion of Navarre, and then left the English to be starved. Such was the result of the first foreign combination of this reign, the first French war.

But now appeared on the stage the man who knew how to make a better use of the treasures left by Henry VII. Wolsey had risen in four years to be what we should call Prime Minister, a thoroughly capable man, trained under Henry VII. and Bishop Fox, unshackled by scruples, a fit agent for a king whose mind was set upon the political aggrandisement of himself and his country. The failure of the first war was to be avenged on France, and the aggressive movement of the Scotch to be vigilantly watched. To Wolsey's official diligence was largely due Henry's successful campaign of 1513, when, with the Emperor Maximilian serving under him, he won the considerable battle of Guinegate, or "the Spurs," a more creditable success than is generally

stated. In the same year Surrey won the great battle of Flodden Field, in which the restless James IV. was slain. 1513. After that defeat the Scots never again seriously troubled England with their hostility. In that same year Leo X. succeeded Julius: the profligate, literary, semi-heathen patron of the Renaissance took the place of the old soldier. Seven years of his tenure of the Papacy were enough to place the growing intelligence of Europe on the side of the audacious monk who had the courage to interpret its ideas and to burn the Pope's bull. While the clever Medicis, Duke and Pope in succession, were laboriously fixing the New Learning on its unassailable eminence, the medieval religious system which they represented was crumbling beneath their feet. We shall see presently how these influences affected England. We are apt to forget in the contemplation of our domestic drama how closely the Tudor kings, father and son, had linked England with the Continent, how the ties of commerce and literature were multiplied by wars, treaties, and alliances, and how the great middle classes of different countries were thus made common sharers in the progress of the age,—those of England advancing before all; for the mighty baronage of the Middle Ages had ceased to exist.

The Peace of 1514 was honourable to the English, who now discovered that they not only had a clever and popular sovereign, working heartily with an efficient administration, but a man of an indomitable English spirit, which insured that officers and men should do their work, or suffer for neglect of it. As a matter of fact, though many mistakes were subsequently made, chiefly through the selfish ambition of Wolsey, the English were never beaten in this reign, while French, Spaniards, and Swiss all in turn received great defeats, and suffered loss of position in consequence. The events of European history now begin to circle round three young sovereigns, two of whom were little more than mere lads, who about the same time came into the inheritance of England, France, and the Empire. Of these Francis I., who succeeded Louis XII. in 1515, and Charles V., who succeeded Maximilian in 1519, were destined to be perpetual rivals; Henry, who had some years' advantage of both, and had established his position, was to be the holder of the balance between them, Wolsey to be flattered and bribed, or

"pensioned," by Charles and Francis in turns. It was his doing that Henry's weight was thrown into the scale of the Empire in spite of the intimacy which had been exhibited with France on the Field of the Cloth of Gold, and it was not till Charles had twice given away the Papacy which Wolsey had sacrificed so much to obtain, that he and his master took up the French alliance.

The second French war (1522-27) was, like the first, recommended to the English by the prospect of recovering the old English provinces, with additions. It was hardly serious, but it may be called the last indulgence of that idea so long cherished in the English breast. On this occasion France was to have been partitioned between Charles, Henry, and the Constable Bourbon — a wild scheme. But when
1525. Francis was defeated and taken prisoner at Pavia, it was wise to prevent him from falling lower. From this threatening aggrandisement of Charles dates, in spite of the short French wars of 1544 and 1557-58, the change of national feeling in favour of France as against Spain. The struggle to save the Reformation, which soon became the leading feature of European politics, was felt to centre at Madrid, and it remained so for more than a century, till in fact Spain became a mere satellite of France. The Stuarts owed no small part of their disasters to their want of perception of the fact. Religious antipathy in short took the place with the English of national pique at the loss of their ancient hold upon the old Gascon territory.

It was in reality the beginning of Wolsey's fall when the nation, represented by the House of Commons and clergy, refused to support with their grants a war policy which was so evidently conceived in his own interests. The capture of Rome by Bourbon as Charles's general, in 1527, and its brutal treatment by the Imperial troops, warned England of the danger lest Charles V. should establish a universal Empire, and helped to form opinion in favour of Henry when the Divorce question brought the Emperor and the defeated Pope into the front rank of his domestic enemies. It was
1529. not till 1529 that the Traité des Dames at last gave rest to Italy, the rest almost of death. Never was the heel of the House of Hapsburg lifted from its head till our own day.

Even if Wolsey had been born in a higher rank, he could

hardly but have been ruined by the position to which the king's favour and his own talents had raised him. As Archbishop of York, Bishop of Bath, of Durham, and afterwards of Winchester, as Abbot of St Albans, Lord Chancellor, and, in addition to all these high offices, as Cardinal Legate, he was the most preposterously overgrown official England had ever seen; and his arrogance and vanity naturally caused him to be the object of envy and hatred. But no one could impugn his ability and industry, nor doubt his zeal for the reform of certain abuses,—a trait of character which even palliates his consuming ambition to obtain the Papacy. In recent years we have seen this remarkable man turned into a hero; but his memory can never lose the taint incurred by his base pandering to the king's passions, his meanness in the matter of the divorce, and his unscrupulous handling of foreign politics to suit his private ends. His boasted sagacity was constantly imposed upon, and his schemes nearly always failed. His merit was that he was on the whole faithful to Henry as far as he understood his interests, and that he perceived the need of drawing England out of her insular position. Further, it has often been observed that Henry deteriorated after Wolsey's disgrace; but we must not attach too much importance to a mere coincidence. Wolsey never did him any good. For Henry's deterioration we must look to his own self-indulgence, to the extraordinary temptations which surrounded him, to the gradual weakening of his religious instincts, and the casuistical perversion of his conscience. The religious system of his life did not arrest such a declension.

Those who regret that Wolsey did not live to work out the Reformation seem to proclaim themselves admirers of the Papacy in preference to the National Church of England. Judging by his conduct he would certainly have retained the Papal obedience, allowed no material change from the medieval corruptions of doctrine, and would only have suppressed the most corrupt of the monasteries. England would have passed through the period much as France did, and probably have shared her fortunes. But Wolsey's patronage of the New Learning, and his grand idea of making the Universities the centre of illumination for England, are his true glory, though more or less shared by all the Tudor princes:

his practice of toleration was his own. His discountenance of capital punishment for so-called "heresy" was his honourable contribution to the Reformation, and was exercised just at the time—from 1520 to 1529—when the new opinions were coming in like a flood, and when a resolute check would have been very serious. Erecting themselves upon the already existing substratum, these opinions soon became robust enough to hold their own amongst the middle and a large part of the upper classes, and thus secured the election of fair-minded and thoughtful men to the great Parliament of 1529. The steady co-operation of the House of Commons with Henry in making the most momentous reforms England has ever experienced, raises it to the first place in the history of Parliaments. No doubt many owed their seats to the Government, but it is a mistake to speak even of these members as mere nominees and puppets of the king. The House by no means existed merely to register the dictates of his will, but often showed its English independence, and kept itself in touch with its constituents.

CHAPTER XIV.

HENRY VIII.—PART II.: 1526–1538.

THE second part of this reign opens with the first stirrings of the Divorce question, which proceeded hand in hand with the Revolt from the Papacy. That revolt was indeed the result of the prolonged national resistance already traced in earlier chapters, but the unworthy treatment Henry received from successive Popes, together with the circumstance that the Emperor and the King of France were now fairly balanced against one another, brought the revolt to a point, and made way for the agency of the personal feelings excited by the Divorce. Let us then briefly trace the steps by which this double action came to pass.

It was in the end of 1526 that Henry's growing aversion to Catherine, not altogether unconnected with the scruples to

which we have referred, received a distinct impulse towards a divorce from the doubts expressed by Francis I. of the legitimacy of Henry's daughter. These doubts related to a proposal which had been made to marry Mary to the son of Francis. It seems probable that the question thus arose before Henry fell in love with Ann Boleyn; but no doubt mixed motives were operative throughout. The plan of consulting the Universities of Christendom on the legitimacy of his marriage with Catherine appears to have come from the bishops, whom he first summoned to give their opinion in 1527. This they declined to give. The king himself was against the Court of Rome being asked to grant the divorce, but was persuaded into it by Wolsey, who believed that his own power, and English money distributed in the usual way, could settle the matter. So perhaps it would have been, had not Charles V. been Catherine's nephew and the Pope his captive. The suit now became one tangled web of intrigue, selfishness, and hypocrisy on the part of Rome, and appeared to Henry, who, as his passion for Ann Boleyn took possession of him, had more and more completely convinced himself of the justice of his cause, a mere device for driving him mad.

In 1528, when the legates sat in London, the farce was obvious even to those who were unconcerned, and the king, finding the country beginning to take up the cause as a national affair, put his case before an assembly of Privy Councillors, nobles, and the Lord Mayor. In 1529, when the Pope presumed to cite the sovereign to Rome, the anti-Papal feeling of the country, excited by disgust at the incongruity and absurdity of the situation, overpowered the sympathy which had been previously felt for Catherine's position and dignified behaviour. Henry now firmly resolved to keep terms no longer either with the Pope or with Wolsey, who had exposed him to this degradation. He had become the laughing-stock of Europe, and the Universities of Europe should draw him out of the net. This reference to them, however, was not the ridiculous proceeding often supposed. The New Learning was fast elevating these bodies in public opinion. The reference was of the nature of an appeal to a Council as against the Papacy, which had become scandalous. In practice the Universities were subjected to influences by the

Emperor, and by the kings of France and England, not less corrupt than those complained of at Rome; but in the end the majority, even in Italy, were in favour of the Divorce, and the English Universities went the same way. They took the natural view, the view which ought originally to have prevented the marriage,—that it had been a marriage with a deceased brother's wife, and that no Pope could grant a dispensation from it. This is not to say that Henry, if he had been a man of honour and principle, would have acted as he did. The long wedded life and the original precautions should have been loyally accepted; but we must remember that even Longland, his confessor, was on his side.

All this, then, set the king on placing the question of the Royal Supremacy as against the Papal Supremacy at rest for ever. From Oxford University he obtained the documents relating to the Wiclif controversy, and was now in full accord with the mass of the people and with a certain section even of the clergy. Shocking as the circumstances of Wolsey's fall appear to us, they did not strike men like Sir Thomas More, otherwise good men, in the same way. He had long forfeited public respect, and received but little pity for the consequences of his egregious failure; for it was felt to be a national failure, a failure for which he was entirely responsible from beginning to end. Hence the iniquitous method of his disgrace, his being brought under the penalties of Præmunire for holding a Legatine Court which the king had himself licensed and approved, was regarded as a just retribution upon one who had often enough strained the law. It was of course impossible that he could be retained as minister, but it was his own abject despair and meanness which brought him to the grave,—a standing lesson to obsequious ministers, ambitious Papists, and mere admirers of intellectual force.

Henry must now be viewed as acting with Thomas Cromwell and Cranmer, supported by the Parliament which saw
1529–1536. him, during its seven years' session, through the main stages of the national government. We are not called upon to exonerate him from personal responsibility in the slightest degree for his treatment of his numerous wives because Parliament or any one else sanctioned it; but we are to consider Parliament as representing the nation in accepting

Henry as a sort of Dictator, the one strong man who could carry England over its difficulties, and support its proper dignity in the face of Pope and Emperor. The first steps of the Reformation were not, however, those of Cromwell, who had not yet risen sufficiently high out of the humble position of his early life. They were those of the able leader of the Humanist reform, Sir Thomas More, who for a short time took the place of the "great scabby belwether," as it is said that he insolently designated in Parliament the fallen minister. As Chancellor he lost no time in attacking the abuses of the ecclesiastical body, which had long been crying for reform. Petitions against them were now at last favourably received; the national efforts to curtail their enormous wealth and power were no longer to be crushed by their close alliance with the Crown, by their official pre-eminence in administration, or by the support of the Pope. More was now instrumental in passing various Acts to reduce extravagant fees, enforce residence, limit pluralities, and inhibit the clergy from secular occupations. These reforms of course raised a great outcry from those affected, but Warham, Colet, and all the Humanists had concurred with More in desiring these reforms,—not one of them with any thought of the consequence to the Papal obedience or the medieval system of doctrine. It was soon discovered that all the parts of the fabric were too closely interlaced and built together to allow of one being left erect when the rest required repair.

Bishop Fisher represented the sentiments and the unwisdom of the mass of the clergy when, upon the House of Commons bringing in some measures of clerical reform, he warned them not to follow the example of the Bohemians, who "fell into heresy for lack of faith." For this he had to make a humble apology. On the other hand, Sir Thomas More and some of the bishops having now, as they supposed, reached a sufficiently strong position, began to persecute the "heretics," or reformers, with great cruelty, by way of being fair to both sides; but they were far from understanding how great a hold these men had gained on the country during the later years of Wolsey's administration. The clergy still held that no one was to deal with any question affecting reform of corrupt doctrine but themselves:

they alone were the guardians of the deposit of faith. How could King or Parliament interfere with their exclusive right to teach, to correct, to punish the laity? The Civil Power had accepted this position in so many words by the Statute *De heretico comburendo.* It had helped the clergy to put down Wicliffites and Lollards ever since. More than a century and a half had passed since the great Acts of Edward III. and Richard II. had asserted the Royal Supremacy, and these had, it was supposed, become obsolete. It had been a period of reaction in favour of Rome; it was not to be thought of that the old anti-Papal action could be seriously revived. This attitude was not at all surprising, and the greatest allowance should always be made for the clergy and their supporters when we reflect upon the rude awakening which they were now to experience. And yet they had been already reminded of their constitutional position in the early years of this very reign. It should never be forgotten that in 1515 Convocation proceeded formally against Standish, the Warden of the Friars, for defending the Royal Supremacy; that he, like Wiclif, appealed to the king; and that the judges to whom the king sent the appeal pronounced that the clergy had brought themselves under the penalties of the Act of Præmunire. Convocation, representing the clergy, with Wolsey, the Cardinal Legate who had convened it, at their head, were forced to beg the king's pardon upon their knees. On that occasion Henry, after counsel with the lay lords, remarked that—"The kings of England in times past had never any superior but God only. Therefore know you well that we will maintain the right of our Crown."

1531. The action taken by Cromwell's advice in 1531, in order to procure the submission of the clergy to the Royal Supremacy, and so to shake off the Papal claim to deal with the Divorce, was based on a repetition of the process of 1515. Both Convocations and the Parliament were brought, as Wolsey had been, by the Court of King's Bench, under the penalties of Præmunire for having acknowledged the Court of the "Legate" of Rome. It was impossible to escape the law, except by means of a pardon. This Henry found he could not help granting to Parliament; but, supported by public opinion, refused to grant to the clergy, except on payment of an immense fine, and the acknowledgment of his

Supremacy. The conditions were complied with, and the king accepted the acknowledgment with a certain qualification, which, though subsequently dropped in the Act of Parliament, was always understood,—"*quantum per legem Christi licet.*"

We must note what was thus really meant, because it is not uncommonly misapprehended. The Royal Supremacy, which did not become the law of the land till 1534, the true era of the Reformation, simply reproduced the laws of William the Conqueror, Edward I., Edward III., and Richard II. The king was not turned into a Pope; but no laws were to be made touching religious matters without his consent. The Supremacy was claimed, and has been treated ever since in authoritative documents, not as anything novel, but as an inheritance of which the Crown had been recently defrauded by Popes and clergy. It was anti-Papal rather than pro-regal; it was a synonym for "Anglican liberties." The King and Parliament were to be replaced in their true position as Guardians of the Establishment. Lord Clarendon has well expressed it thus: "Henry applied his own laws to govern his own people, and this by consent of his Catholic clergy and Catholic people." It is true that the clergy would not have submitted if they could have helped it; but the Constitution once reasserted, it was not long before an unwilling assent changed its character with the more intelligent of the body; and at any rate it was a valid assent, subsequently ratified unexceptionably. 1534.

The importance of this primary assertion of the laws of England was soon shown. Having taken the first plunge much against its will, in order to escape legal penalties, Convocation itself in 1532 declared, in a very remarkable petition to King and Parliament, that England must withdraw from the Roman obedience if the Pope attempted to levy Annates or First-fruits of Benefices. The feeling of the country had for ages been exasperated by the transmission of English revenues to the support of a notoriously corrupt foreign court, which had long lost whatever imperial character it once claimed: it was the plain interest of the clergy to get rid of this imposition, just as the country refused to pay the Papal tribute in the reign of Edward III. And it was undeniably absurd to go on subsidising a Power which they

had, whether willingly or unwillingly, agreed to depose from the usurped headship of the Church. An Act to this effect was accordingly passed in 1532, and confirmed in 1533. In 1532 came also the next step, the Restraint of Appeals to Rome. This again is often misrepresented. It was simply the embodiment of the principle that the "Church of England," its ancient technical designation, contains within itself a sufficient authority for the final determination of all ecclesiastical questions. There was, in short, to be in future no separate action of the clergy apart from the Crown. The Crown represented, in the form known to the age, the laity of the Church; and the laity had their own indisputable, fundamental rights by all laws human and divine.

The fourth step, taken in 1534, was, as we have said, the consummation of the whole, and was consequent on the Bull of Excommunication prepared by Clement VII., but not actually launched till 1538. By this great Act, Parliament confirmed what Convocation had passed in 1531 and 1532, and pronounced the adherence of the nation to the "Articles of the Catholic Faith, and to any other things declared by Holy Scripture and the Word of God necessary to salvation." By it the king received "Visitatorial power over all Religious Houses, and might repress abuses, heresies, &c., which by any manner of spiritual jurisdiction ought and may be lawfully reformed." In the same year Convocation declared that "the Bishop of Rome has no greater jurisdiction conferred on him by God in this kingdom of England than any other foreign bishop," and what is more, this declaration was universally subscribed in dioceses, Universities, and even monasteries. It is a mistake to identify Cromwell too exclusively with these transactions. The leading churchmen of the day were concerned in all of them, and they represented the national, we might almost say, the unanimous conviction of Church and State, based on the lessons taught by centuries of strife. No murmurs were heard, no insurrections took place. It would of course be unlikely that the people should foresee and dictate the course of events. Their general sense of right was represented by Parliament, and the king knew it.

Whether Henry, who had written against Luther, and who vehemently defended all the peculiar forms of Roman doctrine up to the day of his death, would have headed the nation in

its revolt unless it had been for his desire to marry Anne Boleyn and obtain a legitimate male heir, may well be doubted. Volumes have been written on all the disputed points of this unsavoury subject. It is enough to say here that modern research favours the assertion that, having put Katherine away, and having accepted Cranmer's opinion that his marriage to her had been a nullity, requiring therefore no divorce, he privately married Anne in January 1533. About that time Cranmer was appointed Archbishop in Warham's vacancy, and on March 30th was consecrated. On May 23d he pronounced the first marriage null and void, and the second legal. On June 1st Anne was crowned, and on September 7th Elizabeth born. The dates are sufficient for these outlines. Opinion seems to have settled down about Anne, whose memory has been a battle-ground. Taking her conduct as a whole, though her terrible fate engages our compassion, no one can respect her. She may have been guiltless of the alleged crimes for which she died; but her gross levity, her ambition, cruelty, and selfishness, could hardly but court retribution. It is, however, quite another thing to justify the king. Anne was never confronted with Smeaton, her sole accuser, and Henry was betrothed to Jane Seymour the day after Anne's execution, and two days later married her. The breach with the Papacy was justified by law and history, but the "lordly king who broke the bonds of Rome" takes his place with other bad men who have nevertheless at different stages of history been instruments in the promotion of human progress and rational liberty.

We have noticed more than once the force of public opinion which carried King, Ministers, Parliament, and people over the exceeding difficulties presented by the errors of nearly five centuries, the Norman and Hildebrandine errors, those connected with Anselm and Becket, and those which were brought on by the weakness of the Houses of Lancaster and York. A glance at the chief agencies in forming that opinion may conclude this chapter. To Wolsey's spirit of toleration we have paid homage; the country also owed much to his virtual, perhaps involuntary, promotion of the Lutheran movement at the Universities, where, and in large towns such as London and Bristol, the earlier influences of the pre-Reformation were by no means extinct. Further, his

partial suppression of monasteries set people thinking about a larger measure of the same sort. The dates of these proceedings coincided with the progress made on the Continent.

Between the Diet of Worms in 1521 and the Diet of Spires in 1529, the uprising of Luther and the futile opposition of Popes and Emperor had spread the German Reformation like wildfire through a population prepared much as in England, a population whose aspirations had long been similarly suppressed by the strong hand. By 1530 the movement was condensed into a substantial and coherent shape under the "Confession of Augsburg," and in 1531 politically formed by the "Protestant" League of Smalcald. Switzerland and the Low Countries caught the infection. Here, then, were found places of refuge for persecuted Englishmen; and means of intercommunication between England and the Continent were now from various causes multiplied beyond all precedent. The effect upon the Empire was soon visible. Charles V. could no longer command more than a portion of his vast dominions, and was, in fact, paralysed. The Protestant princes became the allies of France, and Francis I. did not even despise the Turks in that capacity. Thus for these all-important years the Continental Reformation, like the English, enjoyed a scarcely interrupted growth. Thus the sufferings of the confessors and martyrs of the English movement—such as Stafford, Bilney, and Latimer, Barnes, Frith, and Tyndale—rather added fuel to the flame which was kindled very generally throughout the commercial classes.

1521–1529.

Of course there was a reaction. It was represented by the Carthusian monks, by Bishop Fisher, and by Sir Thomas More. The last had been the chief champion of the Roman system against the earlier Reformers. He gloried in his zeal, and even wrote, as a part of the inscription which was to be placed upon his own tomb, the words, "*hereticis molestus.*" He "hated" them, says his biographer. The Royal Supremacy was the chief stumbling-block to these reactionaries, and when he and Fisher had been discovered to be more or less implicated in the affair of the traitorous impostor, the "Nun of Kent," their relation to the Government laid them open to grave suspicion. More, indeed, cleared himself, but Fisher was distinctly cognisant of treasonable practices; and

his subsequent refusal to abjure the Papal Supremacy was therefore an additional ground for the sentence of death under which he suffered. It is, however, very generally held that, even if Fisher's execution were justifiable, More's case was one of pure judicial murder. The excellence of the 1535.
man has powerfully pleaded for him at the bar of history; but it is fair to remember that the Deposing Power of the Pope was not a mere theoretical claim. It was, on the contrary, at this time exceedingly practical. The Pope, who sent a cardinal's hat to Fisher, was already holding the sword over the king's head; and to refuse to acknowledge the Act of the Legislature, that great Act of Church and State by which the king was protected, was at least constructive treason. Sad it is, indeed, to think that so rare a character could not be exceptionally spared; but if so, a pardon could not possibly be claimed on the ground of the mercy which he himself had shown to the Reformers. A revolutionary period cannot be judged by the compassionate sentiment of ordinary times, and the bravest of the forefighters on either side are sure to fall first on the field of battle.

CHAPTER XV.

HENRY VIII.—PART III.: 1536–1547.

THE third part of the reign opens with the circulation of the Bible and the Dissolution of the Monasteries,—both of these things being closely connected with one another and with Thomas Cromwell, whose voice had become all-powerful with Henry by 1535; but both master and minister were, as said above, only representing the great mass of the middle classes, who had now become the bones and sinews of the English people. In order to execute the reforms which were necessary for the prevention of anarchy after the Papal Supremacy had been overthrown, Henry, in 1535, made this Cromwell his Vicar-General. If he had been termed "Lord High Commissioner" the appointment would have

been less blamed. The French kings had often appointed Commissioners for Church affairs; Royal Injunctions in matters of ecclesiastical discipline had been common in all ages and in all Christian States. But it must be observed that there was no depravation of the lawful ministry in Henry's proceedings. No layman dreamt of administering the Sacraments; and though bishops took out Commissions to execute their office in this or that locality, they were still consecrated, and still represented the unbroken line which stretched down from the apostles. The Vicar-General himself commands, indeed, no more respect than Henry or Wolsey; but his ability has never been questioned.

The most honourable part of Cromwell's administration was his personal energy in promoting the spread of the Bible; but until the Dissolution of the Monasteries was practically completed, in 1538, he had been unable to place it in every parish church by authority. When that was once done, the victory was secure. We must deal, then, with his Visitation of the Religious Houses as a step in the necessary process of the Reformation, independently of the agent. The justice, expediency, and morality of the measure have received less attention than is due, owing to the reaction which followed the laudations of Cromwell by Foxe and other party writers. The ill-odour which has clung to the agents has tainted their work.

Without entering upon controversial matter more than necessary, it is not too much to assert that the monastic system in England — never an English system — had in Henry VIII.'s time worn itself out. The smaller houses were the worst; for to them public opinion could not penetrate, and so could not influence their societies. Most of them were deep in debt; many almost deserted, and their revenues wholly misapplied. Religious fashions had changed. The best primates had tried their hands at reform in vain. Wolsey and even Fisher had given them up as places of education, and had gone far in preparing the Universities to take their place. The monks lived for the most part easy sinecure lives, and the friars had, to say the least, fallen into disrepute. The real value of the Report of Cromwell's Commissioners can never be properly tested, since it was lost in the reign of Queen Mary, a very suspicious circumstance.

Some efforts have been made of late to balance the evidence upon which the Legislature acted, by the examination of 1536.
Episcopal Registers, and, in a very few cases, not without a measure of success; but, of course, this is a sort of evidence which is very far from conclusive, and it has been more than balanced by evidence of a contrary nature from Episcopal and other Registers.

Nevertheless, to eradicate a system which had struck its roots so deep was a task of Hercules, and it was impossible but that some evil would be done in the process. The pensions of the elderly inmates, who could not begin life over again, were insufficient; and though many of the nuns were, it is said, glad to escape, the blow fell heavily upon others. The country districts lost many hospitable and charitable friends, and for a while education suffered. Time cured these evils. It would be a mistake to apply the notions of sacrilege which sprang up in the reign of the early Stuarts to the Dissolution. Monastic was not considered Church property. Many examples of wholesale suppression had occurred—the Templars, Alien Priories, Wolsey's suppression. It had always been stipulated in the original grants that if the use was perverted their property should revert to the grantors. Even with non-monastic Church property alienation was scarcely, if at all, considered sacrilege, till the Act of James I. incapacitated bishops from alienating to the Crown. No bishop, no mitred abbot, raised a voice against the Suppression. The Legislature was unanimous.

Further, it was right to vest the proceeds of the Dissolution in the Crown, for otherwise the scramble amongst claimants on the plea of foundation would have produced intolerable disorder. The distribution of the proceeds was the worst feature in the transaction. Many heirs did get their own; but the agents, with the king at their head, intercepted, or allowed to be intercepted, a large proportion. By this circumstance alone, however, was the Reformation saved in Mary's reign. On the other hand, some new bishoprics were founded, and the fortifications of the coasts excellently provided. Finally, there were many keen supporters of medieval doctrine, like Bishop Gardiner, who rejoiced that "the Friars, who were the Devil's ministers, had gone with all their trumpery"; many earnest scholars and statesmen,

like Fox, Bishop of Winchester, who pronounced that "all things relating to the primitive simplicity of the clergy, especially of the monastic state, are perverted by Indulgences or corruption, or else become obsolete and exploded by the iniquity of the times." The monasteries were, in fact, an absolute obstruction to all progress; for all spiritual good to men they were effete.

The Insurrections of 1536 in Lincolnshire and Yorkshire, called the Pilgrimage of Grace, were the work of the discontented and enraged sufferers. Another broke out in the north next year. Martial law was, of course, proclaimed, and we must regard what followed rather as acts done under the fear of civil war than the result of calm and deliberate legislation. The larger monasteries, though of much superior reputation to the smaller, could not but be treated like the rest, for it had now become a question of who should govern the country. Intimidation, bribery, cruelty, were used in turn, for anything was preferred to civil war, and it was hard, indeed, in such a struggle to separate one cause of disaffection from another. The majority made the best terms they could, and peaceably surrendered. On the other hand, the execution of the Abbots of Reading, Glastonbury, and Colchester appears, as the circumstances have come down to us, to have been indefensible.

The chief event which accompanied this quasi-revolution was the birth of a son to the new queen, Jane Seymour, and the death of the mother. It was the sense of security shown by the birth of a male heir which helped to tide the king over his immediate difficulties, and to establish his dictatorship. The country looked to him to set the clergy on their new task, which was to provide for the religious wants of the emancipated Church of England. Nor were they disappointed. A temporary substitute for popular use was drawn up under the auspices of the king, Cranmer, and Cromwell, in 1535, called a Primer. This was a simple explanation of the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, a sort of Catechism for young people; but next year was issued a much more important book called 'The Ten Articles,' or, more strictly, 'The King's Articles to Stablish Christian Quietness.' This was authorised by the signature of the king and the Vicar-General, representing the laity, by

seventeen bishops, thirty-nine abbots and priors, and by fifty chief members of the Lower House of Convocation, to represent the inferior clergy. It formed the basis of the present Articles of the Church of England. It had been necessitated by the variety of opinions which came in, after the rejection of Papal authority, through the promulgation of Holy Scripture, and the irruption of new thoughts and forms of expression. It contained, no doubt, medieval doctrine; the country was not ripe for any united action of a more anti-Roman kind, and the unity of the nation was to be secured. The Reformers had to give up something on their side.

Up to this time the place taken by the Ten Articles had been supplied by Papal edicts, legends, and service-books. But the new book was only a first attempt, and failed to give satisfaction. Cranmer was now intrusted with the task of forming a Commission of divines, and with them drew up 'The Bishops' Book, or Institution of a Christian Man,' a treatise embodying the Ten Articles, but very lengthy on Faith and Justification. Neither did this give satisfaction; and though issued by ecclesiastical authority, it was not signed by either King, Council, or Parliament. This was in 1537; but in 1538 two things happened. The Bible, as 1538.
said above, became, by Royal authority, the standard to which the attention of every subject was directed, and at once formed the chief agency in guiding the English mind. On the other hand, Pope Paul III., incensed beyond bearing at the Dissolution of the Monasteries, launched at last the Excommunication which Clement had issued after the execution of Cardinal Fisher, but had kept back. The influence of the continental Reformers was also beginning to make itself seriously felt, and they no longer found themselves opposed at every turn by monks and friars.

Henry now, in 1539, determined on a step which could 1539.
only have suggested itself to a very powerful, not to say tyrannical, Dictator. Fearing the country would break up into hostile fragments, he issued the famous Six Articles, or the "whip with six strings," as it was called, by which, and by the Royal Supremacy, both sides were to be restrained, and indeed were restrained,—a sort of Byzantine decree of silence. By these Articles, capital punishment was to follow a denial of Transubstantiation or any action taken against

Communion in one kind, celibacy of the clergy, observance of vows once taken, solitary masses, and auricular confession. While the Six Articles pressed back the Reformation, the assertion of the Royal Supremacy prevented any revival of the Papal connection. There were a very few but shocking cases of execution on both sides; yet the enforced balance of the parties had its effect in moderating mutual persecution. The nation consoled itself with the reflection that the sufferings of a few individuals were preferable to beginning a new civil war. All other nations were soon torn to pieces by religious wars, except indeed where the fires of the Inquisition did their dreadful work unchallenged. Some roughness, it must be repeated, is inevitable in every revolution. It is much better to accept this position than to deny, or palliate, still less to praise, what shocks our moral sense.

The growing political importance of the foreign Reformers in their contest with Charles V., and the presence in England of their agents, led Cromwell into the snare of promoting the
1540. marriage of the king with Anne of Cleves, and Cranmer into a fuller consideration of the doctrines now established amongst them. By presuming too far, the base-born minister lost his life, after an attempt to save it as abject as that of Wolsey; but Henry only added to his own load of guilt by brutally allowing his tool, no longer useful, to be judicially murdered. The divorce from Anne of Cleves was less shocking than most of his matrimonial proceedings, for it was apparently with the right good will of the person affected. And we are not concerned to feel any great pity for the amorous monarch who became the victim of the vicious Catherine Howard, and calmly ordered her to execution like the miserable Anne Boleyn. As none but a widow was likely to be safe on the dangerous throne, he was more fortunate than he deserved to be in finding a clever wife and a good nurse in Catherine Parr, with enough tact to parry the fatal blow which even she was on the point of receiving for her religious opinions.

Let us turn from these degrading scenes to Cranmer's work in bringing out, in 1543, the last of the Formularies, which completed the constructive work of the reign. This was called "the King's Book" because Henry approved of it and wrote the Preface; but more fully, "The Necessary Erudition of a Christian Man." It had been for three years in the

hands of a body of divines, with the Archbishop at their head. Here it may be seen how far either Cranmer or the king were removed from what was afterwards called Erastianism. We still have in this book the doctrine of Transubstantiation; and it has been a stock charge against Cranmer that he should have assented to what he opposed under Edward VI. and Mary. The defence is based on the proofs which exist of the gradual character of his change of mind. His intercourse with the foreign Reformers was already influencing him on many points, but not yet on this. That his character was weak cannot be denied; but his industry, piety, and good sense enabled him to do for the Reformation what no one else could have done. It would be well if we could wash out the stain which rests on his conduct as to Anne Boleyn; but as to the rest, it is defensible enough, and he often showed a noble courage which contrasts remarkably with other acts of timidity.

Instead, then, of leaving chaos behind him, as has been said, Henry left by these means the people of England reasonably prepared for that fuller Reformation which was completed by Edward VI. and Elizabeth, under the fuller light which learned inquirers were daily and yearly bringing to the subject from the writings of the ancient Fathers and the practice of the Primitive Church. Thus it gradually came to be understood, as the Reformed Church gathered strength and confidence, that its members were most undeservedly reproached by Romanists for forming a schism. The fulminations of the Pope fell harmless, and even became contemptible, in the eyes of those who discovered that the Papal obedience was a usurpation and imposture, and that in throwing it off the lineaments of the true Church, as known in the first ages and based on the Bible, had once more come to light. The Reformers threw in their lot, as far as this charge was concerned, with the great Churches of the East from which the Roman Church had separated.

The reign closes with the easily won victory over the Scots at Solway Moss in 1542, in which year Henry also takes the title of King of Ireland. In this he was justified, for his troops had for the first time reduced the native Irish outside the pale to obedience. Thus, as he at this time also completed the county-organisation of Wales, he had the glory of

placing the three kingdoms in a more wholesome relation to one another than any of his predecessors. He concluded his military exploits by a very solid advantage over the French in the capture of Boulogne. By this he more than balanced the insult to which he was afterwards subjected, the indignity of seeing French ships at Spithead, and French troops in the Isle of Wight; but that was a transient and
1545. barren success. By the Peace of 1545 the English retained their conquest, which the French had been repeatedly baffled in their attempts to recover. Thus the people, recognising that their Dictator had substantially satisfied their wants, accepted the tyrannical proceedings of his later days, when Parliament gave his mere proclamations the force of laws. It was well that he did not live long after this. Gloomy, anxious, diseased, self-punished, he, like other bad men, found his retribution. In allowing him to settle and resettle the succession just as he pleased, Parliament was on the whole right under the circumstances, exceptional as they were.

The fact is, that this strong clever Tudor king had entirely understood his people, and knew exactly how much they would bear. His execution of all who shared the Yorkist blood, even the ancient Countess of Salisbury, on poor pretences, and his savage action in turning upon his oldest friends, the Howards, just before he died, to say nothing of his treatment of his wives, and debasement of the currency, would have destroyed the respect and affection of the people towards any other king. But Henry, strange as it may seem to us, was, for much the greater part of his reign, not only feared but loved. That he thought a thing necessary was a great argument in its favour; for he was himself necessary. Also he was kingly, every inch a king, and not a mere insular prince, but a European monarch; and the English will bear a great deal from any one who proves his hereditary right to the throne by courage, industry, public spirit, and ability.

CHAPTER XVI.

EDWARD VI. (1547–1553) AND MARY (1553–1558).

THERE are very few questions of historical difficulty in either of these short reigns, simplified as they are by the fact that there was no time in either for more than one wave of religious sentiment to break over the land. The Protestant action of the one—on certain points premature and violent—and the fierce Roman Catholic reaction of the other, had each its definite place in preparing the country for the Elizabethan Establishment. Yet absorbing as the religious fluctuations were, there was time for the victory of Pinkie in 1547, the loss of Boulogne in 1550, and the loss of Calais in 1558. The first had the disastrous effect of combining all parties of the Scots, even that of the Reformers in whose interest it was fought, against the English; the second was the direct consequence of the feebleness of Edward VI.'s reign; the last was the issue of the ill-fated marriage of Mary with Philip of Spain.

That the helm of Government fell into the hands of men so unfit to rule during Edward's minority as Somerset and Northumberland, is clearly traceable to the circumstance that they were the only two councillors and executors of Henry's will who had achieved a reputation under him in a military capacity. Both were skilled officers, and as such, at a moment of difficulty, came to the front in succession. Both invited their own fate, both found out that England had been too long under settled government to submit to the rule of mere adventurers, especially if their administration was unsuccessful. But here the resemblance ends. Somerset was a sincere though fanatical Protestant, but with many amiable qualities; Northumberland, son of Henry VII.'s minister of extortion, and father of the Leicester of Elizabeth's reign, was, by his own confession, a mean hypocrite throughout. After supporting Cranmer in his moderate progress, the former damaged his cause by his own proceedings, but was taken away before he could ruin it; the latter affected Protestant zeal simply as a road to power, and was crushed with ease. The reaction produced by Mary's cruel reign

threw the country back into the path of reform from which it had been for a moment diverted, and enabled Elizabeth to wield an overwhelming mass of public opinion in favour of replacing the Church where it had been left at the death of Edward VI.

The two chief political errors of Protector Somerset's career were, first, that he undertook a multitude of enterprises all at once, his administration being at the same time notoriously ill-conducted; and this brought to a point the discontent felt at the deterioration of coin, which had been getting worse in Henry's reign, and now of itself almost produced a revolution: men found themselves reduced to less than half their incomes. The other was an estimable, but ruinous, weakness in relation to the enclosure of land, by which the "new men" and the lawyers were harassing their victims. He was unwilling, as a devoted friend of the people, to put down with a strong hand the local insurrections which now broke out, and then, after having restored order, to deal with the question; so that the task of civil government fell into the hands of his rival, Northumberland, who had no scruples. Then Somerset's fate was sealed. Incompetency was the unpardonable sin. To describe the details of his fall, his second transient recovery of power, and his final destruction, ennobled as it was by his fine bearing on the scaffold, would be out of place here. His Protectorate exposed him to the usual fate of "Protectors"; but he has no small place in the history of England. He represented the long-repressed determination of the governing classes to place the Reformed Church of England on a secure and independent basis, and, individually, he represented something more.

As far as Somerset was content to assist Cranmer in repealing the Six Articles, allowing the clergy to marry, abolishing the Latin services, changing the Mass into a Communion "in both kinds," and relieving people from compulsory Confession, he and his friends, with scarcely any opposition in Council, were doing what the country had been fairly prepared to do. The Convocation of the Clergy, in the first year of Edward's reign, petitioned for these changes, and Parliament of its own accord repealed, along with the Six Articles, all laws against heretics. It also com-

pleted the suppression of the last stronghold of the Papal party—the Chantries. Nor was there any general, or very strong, opposition to the abolition of such images as had been idolatrously worshipped. Finally, Parliament passed the great Act of Uniformity of 1549, which ordered that 1549.
the "First Prayer-book of Edward VI.," drawn up by Cranmer's Commission, should be the only one in use. The too sudden change of public worship added, indeed, to the disturbances which the Enclosures produced in the country districts; but taking this class of changes as a whole, the Council and Parliament represented the deliberate judgment of England. When, however, Somerset's Protestantism began to take the form of indiscriminate iconoclasm, accompanied by visible self-enrichment, and threats of pulling down Westminster Abbey to enlarge Somerset House, he raised up enemies on all sides, and he had given cause enough for distrust on other grounds.

As to his rival Warwick, or, as he made himself, the Duke of Northumberland, finding that he was forced by the progress of the Reforming movement to take the same direction, he threw in his lot with Parliament and Convocation, and was at the head of affairs when Parliament passed, without apparently any serious opposition, the Second Act of Uniformity. This sanctioned the Second Prayer-book, which Elizabeth revived, just as the First Act had sanctioned the First Prayer-book: and though absolute proof is wanting for the part which appears to have been performed by the clergy in their proper Assembly in establishing the First Book, there is no reasonable doubt about it in the case of the Second.

The restoration of the Church of England to the primitive model was thus effected by the joint action of clergy and laity. It cannot however be doubted that as Henry VIII. and his Parliament, representing the laity, exercised a powerful influence upon the clergy, which drew them reluctantly into line with himself, so the Council and Parliament of his successor, along with the young king, led the way to the more complete Reformation and Establishment which exists at the present day. The doctrinal formulæ, which thus became the law of the land, were however all prepared for the laity by bishops and divines, of whom Cranmer was by far the chief. He is the most prominent person of the times,

and as such has been the subject of literary dispute down to our own generation. It is his work which has remained; and the briefest outline of the progress in his beliefs towards the position which he finally took up and imprinted on the nation is therefore necessary. It ought not to be impossible to form a fair estimate both of the man and his work.

We have noticed Cranmer's rise to power, and admitted the blame which attaches to certain acts of his earlier public life. Perhaps it may be balanced by the courageous opposition he made to the king's "Six Articles." At any rate, he was almost the only public man the king consistently respected. Henry, by no means a bad judge, valued his learning; and they had a common feeling both as to the need of slow and gradual processes, and in the desire to continue such customs as did not conflict with such growth: they had also a common belief in the ultimate authority of the Bible. Towards the end of Henry's reign circumstances were influencing the king towards a further movement. The third French war of 1544-45, and the barefaced desertion of his cause by Charles V., disgusted him with foreign politics, and disposed him to welcome ideas of strengthening the independence of the English Church, a position which he had formerly abhorred. He knew well how widely those ideas were entertained by his people, and he had become nervously anxious about the succession of his son. Thus Cranmer found a willing listener in the king when he advocated the "conversion of the Mass into a Communion" in the vernacular, and suggested the abolition of some of the most abject ceremonies, such as "Creeping to the Cross." The last was proclaimed; and as the first was under the consideration of Cranmer and a body of divines by the king's orders when he died, there was, under the new *régime*, no difficulty in putting it in execution, especially as Cranmer's admirable English Litany had already been established. Edward VI.'s House of Lords, including a majority of the bishops, as well as the House of Commons, passed the new Communion office, which we still have in our Prayer-books; and there could hardly be a more momentous decision. It ought indeed no doubt to have been submitted to Convocation, but that was at the moment scarcely possible, and as it was included in the Prayer-book, which soon afterwards received the sanction

both of Parliament and Convocation, its title to be a legitimate Church document is indisputable.

The reason why the new Prayer-book was so suddenly brought before the country instead of being preceded by a gradual preparation under the Protectorate, was partly because it was thought that the previous books of Henry's reign, supplemented by the Homilies, had afforded sufficient preparation, and partly because the defeat of the German Protestants at Muhlberg by Charles V. and Maurice of Saxony in 1547, and the subsequent publication of Charles's "Interim," had disposed the German divines to make a closer alliance with Cranmer and the Protector. Some of them were now invited to settle in England and accept offices of importance. Of these, Bucer, who became Regius Professor of Divinity at Cambridge, was by far the greatest man. He was reckoned almost equal to Melanchthon, the acknowledged master of Lutheran theology; but was distinguished by his decided opposition to the Lutheran doctrine of Consubstantiation. He had also been the chief writer in the book of Archbishop Herman of Cologne, called "the Consultation," where he had proved that solitary Masses were contrary to primitive practice as well as to the Bible. Cranmer had been profoundly influenced by that book towards the end of Henry's reign, and soon became personally intimate with Bucer, whose lectures, like Peter Martyr's at Oxford, were attended by the whole University, and were so powerfully influencing public opinion as to hasten the action of Cranmer and Somerset.

The principle of Communion naturally led to the abolition of Chantries, and to the provision for Common Prayer. In the First Prayer-book, except as regards this point, there is not much trace of Bucer's influence; but in Cranmer's controversy with Gardiner, which led to the issue of the Second 1552.
Prayer-book, the views of the German divines found more or less expression. This influence has, however, been grossly exaggerated. English divines maturely weighed, considered, and adapted these foreign elements; and it would indeed have been absurd to have neglected the assistance of those who were engaged in the same struggle, and who possessed a more perfect knowledge than the English of the history of the medieval departure from the faith of the Early Church.

At any rate, the people of England were thus delivered

from an endless wrangle over theological subtleties, while they yet retained every single landmark of their historical faith and their historical Church. Thus was produced the great standard work of the Book of Common Prayer, which has stood its ground for three centuries and a half, and has been only second to the Bible in forming the English mind. This is why such a sketch as the above must find a distinct place in the History of England. The arrangement of the other Church Formularies must not here detain us.

We have left to the last the share taken by the youthful king in these great events. It was far from small, but cannot be distinguished from that of Cranmer. It was significant that Henry had himself selected Cheke, Ascham, and Coxe, the ablest teachers of the day, but all decided Reformers, for the prince's tutors, while Cranmer as his godfather, and Somerset as his uncle, had supported such teaching to the utmost. From this Edward never wavered. His letters and journals show a mind and an education very far beyond his years, and he had the full Tudor strength of will. Perhaps it was well that, like Somerset, he was carried off before he was led into too violent courses. As it was, he took no inconsiderable part in the great movement, and left his mark for ever.

MARY.

Untaught by adversity, Mary's whole life led up to the exhibition of bigotry and cruelty which has rendered her name a bye-word. Attempts have been made to shift the blame to Pole, Gardiner, Bonner, Philip II., Renard, the Imperial ambassador, and to the Council, especially to Paulet, one of its members; but like the spot of blood on the hand of Lady Macbeth, it clings to her indelibly. Directly and indirectly, from beginning to end she was responsible. And yet it is impossible not to pity the sickly queen, nursing the vengeance for her mother's wrongs, self-deceived in her marriage, her Tudor pride humbled to the dust, and "Calais" written on her heart. This was not the dictatorship the English required, nor would they have borne it much longer. They rallied for the moment round the persecuted Elizabeth, for whom they

saw that her dying sister must soon make room, and waited for the impending stroke which was to set them free. How little did the outraged people perceive that the very Spanish marriage which they detested was the means of preserving the precious life on which their hopes were built. The daughter of Anne Boleyn did not owe her life to the cruel daughter of Catherine, but in the first place to the Council, which on this point controlled Mary, and afterwards to the calculating policy of Philip, who preferred to take his chance of uniting Spain and England by marriage with Elizabeth on some future day to the prospect of the union of France, under Mary Stuart, with England and Scotland. He little knew that his cautious policy was to be, as so often happened in his guilty career, the cause of his own ruin. The acute and unscrupulous Renard, his father's ambassador, had had a much clearer perception of the danger which lay in the future.

In these pages we must pass over the dramatic incidents 1554
of Wyat's insurrection, the Spanish marriage, and Cardinal Pole's arrival,—all of which took place in 1554, and may not even linger over the terrible martyrdoms which have stamped the resolution of the English never again to bow to the yoke of Rome. The number has not been ascertained with absolute certainty, but Canon Dixon, the latest authority, places it at 279. These were not merely martyrs, but patriots of the highest order, buying the future of England at the price of their lives. To past generations they were almost exclusively known through Foxe's famous book, which, in spite of some errors and much sensational colouring, is still indispensable. The vast mass of it, however painful to read, is indisputable, and modern historians, like Bishop Burnet in his great 'History of the Reformation,' largely rely upon it.

It is scarcely necessary to warn reasonable people that the comparison between Elizabeth's execution of Jesuits for high treason and these Marian martyrs, regarding it as a mere question of number and balance, is perfectly untenable. These were the victims of the Inquisition; those were deliberate invaders, in concert with the country's enemies, who when caught might have been set free if they would have repudiated the "Deposing Power of the Pope." They were

conspirators, gallant men indeed, but traitors. Still less is it permissible to minimise the odium of the Marian martyrdoms by dwelling on the small value for human life exhibited in the laws which protected property, even in later times.

One martyr stands forth for notice before all others, the Archbishop, whose offences could never be forgiven by Mary or her friends. We have assigned him his due as the chief agent in giving form to the English Reformation, and wisely building up the independence of the National Church. He knew what was in store for him, but refused to fly when Mary came to the throne. Far from so doing, he wrote an attack on her religion which found its way into print, and all but cost him his life before the destined time. He often, on the other hand, had exhibited weakness; but no one can doubt his sincere spirit of devotion, his earnest desire to benefit his fellow-creatures, or his genuine love of truth. Many of the charges made against his honesty disappear when we regard his gradual acceptance of the Reformed doctrines; many are too absurd to require notice. If we regard his work as good, it adds to his praise that he knew how to pursue his course with the brutal Henry, the Machiavellian Cromwell, the impetuous Somerset, the hypocritical Northumberland, and the enthusiastic young Edward. When the time came that his work was to be tried by fire, he, like Wiclif, challenged all his enemies to confute him, singly or together. Worn out, wearied, and alone, physical weakness and the vile contrivances of his enemies overcame him towards the last; but did he not expiate his recantation when he deliberately burnt the right hand which had signed it?

CHAPTER XVII.

ELIZABETH (1558–1603).—PART I.

We have arrived at the second Tudor Dictatorship, "the spacious times of great Elizabeth," even more closely interwoven with the history of the Continent than the first, and

more difficult to present in outline. That is so not only on account of the tortuous methods by which the queen attained her ends, but because the incessant conspiracy of Romanist Europe, sometimes open, sometimes secret, against the head of the Reformed Communions, forced upon the weaker, but finally triumphant party, a policy of subtle compromise and intricate combinations. Just as the rough hand of Henry VIII. had been borne, even cheerfully, because it prevented one part of the nation from flying at the throat of the other, while England held its place safe and high, during a transition period, amongst its neighbours, so the scarcely less rough hand of Elizabeth was still more cheerfully, even exultingly, borne, because her subjects were convinced that they must and might leave her and her ministers to play out the game. Nothing less would carry the country through its awful difficulties. It was no time to demand a return to full constitutional government; but she aptly concluded the dynasty. Happily for England, there were no more of the strong Tudor line in reserve; or the Great Rebellion, which must have come with tenfold force, would not have been the first step towards the recovery of the Constitution, nor the Revolution of 1688 the second.

There are two great landmarks in the reign, the "Massacre of St Bartholomew's" in 1572, and the defeat of the Armada in 1588; but in order to obtain a proper view of their significance, we must submit to the expedient of noting the sequence of events under no less than six divisions, each marked by a definite characteristic. Let us call them the periods of Settlement, of Furious Struggles at home, of Tranquillity, of Renewed Struggles at home and abroad, of Triumph, and of Repose. It should also be observed that there is one master-key to the first four of these periods, the duel between Elizabeth and Mary Stuart, the Una and Duessa of the "Faery Queen"; also, that while no sovereign was ever better served by ministers than Elizabeth, she herself, like her father, is the true centre round which everything else revolves.

These ministers claim our first attention. Sir William Cecil, afterwards Lord Burleigh, already officially experienced during three reigns, though still young, was the queen's chief adviser from first to last—that is to say, till he died in 1598.

Philip II., who also died in that year, was thus his exact contemporary; for he mounted the Spanish throne just when Elizabeth and her minister began their work together. He was not long in discovering that there was one man, possessed of the most balanced judgment ever brought to the head of English affairs, who was capable of unwinding all his most secret intrigues; and, in fact, the two arch-enemies, the one in London and the other in Madrid, were pitted against each other for forty years. Elizabeth had also the good sense to select the wisest and most learned ecclesiastic of his day, Matthew Parker, for her Primate and chief adviser in Church affairs. It should be noted that both of these sages, as well as the queen herself, had been Conformists to the Papal obedience under Mary—a position far from heroic, but not for a moment to be confused with that of men whose philosophical indifference to the questions which exercised all the highest minds enabled them to join in the persecution of Romanists and Anglicans at different times with a sublime impartiality. Such men were political trimmers, who contrived, if they did nothing else, to "make families."

It was under the advice of Cecil and Parker that Elizabeth, on coming to the throne, made her famous settlement or Establishment of religion, and, as this was the flag round which her subjects rallied in the critical struggles of her reign, it must precede everything else.

When Elizabeth's first Parliament met in January 1559, Convocation, of course, met too. It at once claimed that the clergy alone had authority in matters of faith, and proceeded to pass resolutions in favour of Transubstantiation, the Mass, and the Papal Supremacy. The bishops and the Universities signed a formal agreement to this effect. That in the constitution of the English Church, Convocation, as Convocation, has no such power as this, was proved by the steps now taken. The Crown, advised by the Council and Parliament, took the matter in hand. As every element, except the Roman, had been excluded from the clerical bodies, a consultation was ordered between the representatives of both sides, and all preaching was suspended till a settlement had been arrived at between the queen and the Three Estates of the realm. The consultation broke up on the refusal of the Romanist champions to keep to the terms

agreed upon; but even before it took place Parliament restored the Royal Supremacy, repealed the laws of Mary affecting religion, and gave the queen, by her own desire, not the title of "Supreme Head," but "Supreme Governor" of the Church of England. A Commission of divines was now appointed to report whether any alterations should be made in the Second Prayer-book of Edward VI. This was the proper course, since it was a return to the *status quo*, as regards the great monument of the joint work of State and Church, recently overthrown by violence. The alterations were slight; but that of the Eucharistic Service helped to reconcile the Roman Catholics, who attended the Reformed service for twelve years after the Convocation, until, indeed, 1570. the Bull of Excommunication issued by Pius V. commenced the Italian Schism in England. The summary deprivation of the Marian bishops followed, and the consecration of a new hierarchy.

The best proof that this course was the will of the nation, and not a mere arbitrary act of despotism, is that no opposition worth speaking of was offered by Parliament, except, of course, by the Marian bishops, and that the Act of Uniformity which sanctioned the Prayer-book had no sooner passed than the book came at once, with every mark of goodwill, into general use throughout the land. The Marian reaction had been hollow. Even the clergy, who had accepted it almost without protest, now almost universally conformed.

Thus it will be seen that the term "Erastian" is not applicable to the Establishment. There was no new religion imposed by the State, but a restoration of the Primitive Faith under the guidance of the whole Church. The clergy, who had been placed in a false position by the corruption of ages, were not allowed to stand in the way. It was also an Anglican Establishment, neither Lutheran, nor Zwinglian, nor Calvinistic. But to deny its obligations to the continental divines would be equally unjust and ungrateful. Elizabeth's subsequent troubles, indeed, as regards the Establishment, did not come from the schismatic Romanists, but from the advanced wing of the Reformers, who had imbibed what afterwards came to be called "Puritan" principles during their exile. Against her own will she was thus obliged to insist on a more complete departure from the

ancient ceremonial than had been at first intended, but to hit off the exact *via media* after such a history would have been an impossible task. Like her father, she felt that the country could not be divided in the presence of its enemies; the only course was to reduce the extremes on both sides to the most manageable limits possible. Of course, it took time to produce a body of efficient clergy, but she knew how to make the Universities useful in the work.

Turning now, as we must, to Mary Stuart's career for an interpretation of Elizabeth's general policy, we must consider her position as the outcome of the religious history of Scotland. The rival queens were each the prime product of their age at a critical period; but Mary had the misfortune of being by far the most convenient weapon that presented itself to Popes and Papal monarchs against this new portent, a small nation under a female sovereign, audaciously presuming to be not only religiously and politically independent, but to be the head and centre of the Protestant world in its revolt.

The medieval Church of Scotland is admitted to have been about the worst in Europe; and it had become so contemptible that its fall was the most terrible of all. Political power was shared between the ecclesiastics and the nobles: there was no such thing as a House of Commons; and the place of the Crown was never what it was in England. Thus no precedents had been formed, as in England, for the defence of the Royal Supremacy. During the long period of twenty-four years, from 1522 to 1546, the most eventful years of the Reformation in England and Germany, the land was practically ruled by two prelates in succession, the two Beatons—Archbishop James, the uncle, and Cardinal David, his nephew—both very able, both shamelessly immoral men. The Wicliffian movement, which profoundly stirred the people in the fourteenth century, had been cruelly crushed, and the ecclesiastics exerted themselves to bar out the flood of the new movement when it began to filter in from England, Germany, and Switzerland. But the power of the nobles was sufficient to give it a footing when it had once made its way amongst them, as it did in spite of persecution, and they, or at least a large body of

them, placed themselves at the head of the people, who joyfully accepted its principles.

Thus, unrestrained by the Crown, and unprepared by an education, such as the English had enjoyed, the movement flooded Scotland more like the resistless tide of a Revolution than a gradual Reformation. The nobles were poor, and the clergy possessed half the land. Civil war burst forth. A fierce and united uprising swept everything before it, and under the leadership of Knox, fresh from slavery in French galleys, the system which carried the Protestants farthest from Rome was very naturally adopted, and the monastic system destroyed at a blow. Mary of Guise, James V.'s widow, the Regent, could make but a feeble resistance to the "Congregation," which banded the Reformers together, and in 1559 the young King of France, who had just married her daughter, Mary Stuart, sent troops to defend the Papal party. Elizabeth now interfered at once and with goodwill, for Francis II. and Mary had taken up an openly hostile position to England by quartering the English arms. This was no relic of past history, but a direct assertion of Elizabeth's bastardy, and of Mary's claims to be Queen of France, England, and Scotland. The English troops, along with the Scotch Reformers, forced the Regent to make the Treaty of Edinburgh, soon after which she died, worn out. The French troops, indeed, evacuated Scotland; but Mary Stuart, who soon came over to her kingdom on the death of her young husband, would never ratify that treaty.

Thus Elizabeth's reign opened with clear indications that she would have to pursue three distinct and concurrent lines of policy; and in strict accordance with that opening, these lines may be traced from beginning to end of her reign. (1) She had, before all things, to take care that France and Spain were kept out of the British Isles, especially out of Scotland, where they each had a pretext for interfering, one from the family connection, the other from its headship of the Papal cause. (2) As a means to this end, France and Spain had to be played off one against the other. Together they were more than a match for England, exposed as she was to the attacks of conterminous and independent Scotland, and with the dead-weight of Ireland to carry. (3) The Protestants of the three adjacent countries, France, Scotland, and the Span-

ish Netherlands, must be summoned to help, but only in a certain way. They must be encouraged and assisted, just enough to keep their sovereigns employed, just enough to prevent them from being crushed, but not enough to make them rely too much upon England. More than this would be not only an unreasonable use of English funds, and injurious to their own self-reliance, but Elizabeth, as an Anglican, had very little sympathy with the species of Reformation to which Protestants generally had committed themselves. Her position was one of extreme delicacy. She had her own Roman Catholic subjects to consider as well as the Protestants; half her Council, half her court ladies, were Papists. It was thus she kept her hold on their Communion,—still a power not to be neglected. As to Scotland, it was necessary to pursue the English policy, which had so long formed the substitute for bootless conquests, of keeping alive, in a form suited to the age, an English party. Careful attention to these deliberate lines of the queen's operations will save us from becoming the victims of the captious criticism which pursues her memory. The more clearly we trace the queen's own mind, as distinguished from that of her ministers, in the last of these three lines, the more title she will seem to have to our admiration.

It is at first sight painful to turn from the successful statesmanship of the great queen to the apparent littleness which her matrimonial projects betrayed; but it is quite as easy to interpret them. It did not probably give her much concern when she decided to refuse Philip II., who sought her hand very soon after his wife's death, and never forgave her for the refusal. The list of her flirtations is appalling. She encouraged, more or less till his death, her chief favourite, Leicester, Lord Arran, the miserable Charles IX. of France, the Archduke Charles. Less seriously, men coupled her name with the King of Sweden, the Duke of Holstein, with Pickering, and Arundel. Ivan the Terrible, Czar of Russia, proposed for her hand. In later life she played with each of the French princes in turn, Anjou and Alençon. But the fact is, that however undignified and unedifying the spectacle, her action in these matters was almost exclusively a political weapon. She had a heart like other people, and it was, foolishly no doubt, given to the handsome and courtly Leicester, but it is

the most honourable thing of her life that she never yielded to its dictates. Her Tudor pride, her devotion to her people, her sense of duty, kept her, as she boasted, a Virgin-queen. We need not notice the foul stories, derived from Jesuit sources, concerning her alleged misconduct with Leicester, Simier, Hatton, and others. Mr Froude's research has sufficiently disposed of them all. Baited as she was on every side, precluded from the use of means open to many rulers, she discovered the power possessed by a female sovereign who had the skill to employ it. It was a diplomatic game by which one dangerous court was played off upon another. How often did she gain time by these hollow courtships, how often did she parry attacks! She certainly amused all Europe; and, unlike her seductive rival, she broke no hearts. In no other age would such a spectacle have been possible.

We have noticed the contrast Elizabeth presents to Mary. Let us watch the steps by which the latter, the hope of Roman Europe, became the prisoner of the champion of the Reformation. Our first period ends with her flight over the Border. 1568.
Her stormy career up to that time had been one continuous quarrel with her people, and this is the more intelligible the more we divest ourselves of the ideas suggested by her title. She was much more French than Scotch, French not only by the language, habits, and manners she had acquired during thirteen years of education, which began from early youth, but French of a peculiar type, that of her mother and uncles, the famous Guise family, far superior in ability and resolution to the ruling House of Valois, now at its last dregs. Mary carried with her to Scotland all the Ultramontane, Inquisitorial energy of her kin, and though she could display it but little for want of power, it made her indifferent to the wishes of her people, contemptuous of their opinions, and of course inaccessible to the sermons of Knox and his allies. If she had not been, by means of her extraordinary charm, her ambition, and her masculine courage, a most formidable enemy, she might perhaps have saved her throne. As it was, her subjects felt they were opposing her in the name of their fellow-Reformers in all lands. On her it seemed to depend whether the fury of "The League" should sweep them out of Christendom: on Elizabeth whether they should survive, and eventually govern the world.

This cosmopolitan issue was the true reason why Elizabeth, when she had once given shelter to her rival from the pursuit of her subjects, was never able to withdraw from the position of keeper. Nor could Mary, the willing agent or tool of the general conspiracy, give way. Though her person was under strict keeping, her spirit was ever predominant. One or other must perish. Mary's dreadful story is indeed, as Mr Froude has shown, one long under-plot to the Elizabethan drama.

Was the Queen of Scots guilty of the crimes alleged? The controversy concerning the Casket Letters, so famous in history, is not even yet concluded. If they are genuine, she was one of the most debased and abandoned of women; but even if they are forgeries, as seems probable (at least as to the second and worst letter), her character is by no means cleared. Even for her indisputable share in the affairs of Chatelard, Rizzio, Darnley, and Bothwell, she forfeited all consideration from any but partisans. Others were guilty too,—the intriguing Murray, the brutal Bothwell, the Protestant lords, and Secretary Lethington. If Elizabeth's amours are comedy, Mary's are tragedy of the most appalling kind. It may at least be said that Elizabeth and her ministers believed in Mary's guilt; and that, as to her subsequent conduct, her participation in Babington's conspiracy technically justified her execution. It was only one out of many plots of which she was the centre; and she refused freedom on the terms which were alone consistent with Elizabeth's security.

It is quite another thing to justify the base proceedings of the English ministers in entrapping Mary to her doom. Elizabeth was indeed always in search of some compromise by which Mary might be set free without doing harm; but the course into which she drifted was the worst she could have selected in the long-run. It would have been noble and generous of the English to set her free on any terms, but it was not for herself Elizabeth had to think. It would have involved England in open war with the Papist States at a time when the country was in no condition to engage in it. Posterity has pronounced sentence upon Elizabeth. Nothing can ever wash out the stain; not even the fact that the mass of the English people, exasperated at the danger the queen incurred by these conspiracies, forced her hand, nor the verdict of Ranke, who styles the execution an act of

"political justice." No previous crimes on the other hand ought to extinguish our admiration for Mary's fine behaviour on the scaffold. It was surely no impenitent culprit who could thus say farewell to the world. 1587.

CHAPTER XVIII.

ELIZABETH.—PART II.

It was best to take in at one glance the relations of the two queens. It was the flight of Mary from her subjects in 1568, and her two trials, at York and in London, which brought on in the second period (1568–1572) that furious struggle with domestic enemies, excited by foreign Powers, which we have now to notice. The rising of the north, which was put down with great but necessary severity, the Papist conspiracy, and Norfolk's treason, led up to Pius V.'s excommunication of Elizabeth "and the heretics adhering to her," in 1570. They were all parts of a united effort to stop the career of the sovereign who had by this time completely alarmed the Romanist world. That world had combined its forces just at this time to roll back the Reformation all over Europe; and here was an unexpected opposition arising from a country which had been supposed to be quite enfeebled by the events of the last two reigns. It had become more serious than ever since the revolt of the Netherlands had broken out in 1568, and aroused that noble spirit of independence which received its reward at last in 1648. It is the first of the two inestimable debts owed by Europe to the Dutch. In that same year (1568) the cruel Philip had "condemned their whole nation to death." The "Bloody Council" commenced its session; fugitives by the thousand were settled at Sandwich, and elsewhere on English coasts. Egmont and Horn exemplified the fate in store for Philip's victims. 1568–1572.

In Scotland the struggle displayed itself in the murders of Regents Murray and Lennox; but English influence was sustained by the dread lest Elizabeth should let Mary loose

to confront her enemies. In Ireland she had carried her father's policy still further under Sussex, Sidney, and Perrott, well knowing that unless her hold there was secure, it would be the natural point of attack for her enemies, as indeed came to pass. A most unfortunate mistake retarded her progress in that country. Instead of giving the Irish the Bible in their own language, as was done at this time for the Welsh with the happiest results, the English Bible was alone allowed. Of course the language of the conquerors did not greatly recommend its adoption. Finally, the French religious wars had dismally commenced in 1562, with the massacre of Vassy and the government of France by the family of Guise. The formation of the celebrated "League" in 1566 between these princes of the House of Guise, the queen-mother, the Pope, and Charles IX. makes the backbone of French history till 1589, when Henri IV. mounts the throne. The French religious war did indeed interpose between England and her enemies, but it was only because of the adroitness of Elizabeth's diplomacy.

1566–1589.

This was the Europe, all in flames, with which she had to deal, and to deal so that the conflagration should not reach her own shores. A single false step would have been ruinous. It is the full verdict taken upon the whole case, not upon the petty criticism of this or that isolated fact, which gives weight to Sir Walter Scott's remark in 'Kenilworth': "Elizabeth united the caprice of her sex with that sense and sound policy in which neither man nor woman ever excelled her."

It may help us to understand this opinion if we here group together, regardless of dates, the three occasions on which Elizabeth interfered with Continental affairs by assisting the Protestants. The first took place in our first period, when with the double view of recovering Calais and preventing Condè and the Huguenots from being crushed, she accepted Havre from their hands, and sent Poynings and Warwick to their help. This, beyond the honour it brought to the English arms, failed of any lasting effect through the weakness of the allies of the English, who soon found it expedient to make terms. Elizabeth ever afterwards was cautious of such enterprises, nor did she interfere again till, in 1584, she found herself unable to resist the prayers of her

1562.

1584.

own people and the Dutch, who were on the point of being overwhelmed after the assassination of William the Silent.

This great patriot had always led his party to seek the French alliance against Spain rather than the English; nor was it till the "French Fury" of Antwerp opened their eyes that the Protestants understood the proper value of the latter alliance. Then at last Elizabeth sent Leicester, at the head of a small army, which was indeed soon foiled by the consummate skill of the chief general of the age, the Prince of Parma, and, owing to the imminence of the Armada, recalled. But its aid had been by no means despicable, and it had brought out the fact that the Dutch were still capable of helping themselves. The queen had already shown her usual good sense in refusing the sovereignty of the Netherlands in 1574. She had sufficiently shown her allies that their cause was at bottom the same, and at the critical moment they splendidly repaid the debt by preventing Parma's army from joining the Armada.

Her last intervention of this sort was when Henri IV. was 1591.
on the point of being overborne by the League, which had prevented him from being recognised as King of France. Parma had already out-generalled him as he had Leicester, and there was imminent danger of the whole coast of France and the Netherlands falling under the power of England's deadly enemies. Elizabeth now sent successive bodies of picked troops under Norris and Essex to assist at the siege of Rouen, and then, when Parma raised the siege, to support other operations; but she was too wise to trust Henry with a large force. Deep was her disgust when he soon after- 1594.
wards changed his religion to obtain the crown; but he was her friend and ally for life.

Perhaps this is the place to observe that the queen owed her power to interfere when she liked, to beat back all assaults, and to bring the greatest Power Europe had ever seen to its knees, not only to mere policy or statecraft, nor to the chivalrous gallantry she inspired, nor even to that mixture of love and terror which enabled her to command unbought services from her ablest subjects, but to the minute care and good order with which every part of her administration was conducted. It is for these matters that we still have recourse to contemporaries like Camden.

Elizabeth illustrated this remark during our second period by giving the final touch to her previous settlement of the Established Church. In 1571 the forty-two Articles of the Church, represented in Henry's reign by the "Ten Articles," and formulated in that of Edward VI., were agreed upon between the Queen in Council and Convocation, and were signed by all clergymen, as well as by every civil officer. They were now thirty-nine in number, and were put out with the same view as the decrees of the Council of Trent which came out at this time, and the Confession of Augsburg which had been accepted by the Lutherans. Each Christian community felt the need of a standard, a common bond of union. The Council of Trent, after three distinct sessions, spread over seventeen years, had now, under the management of a new Order, the Jesuits, founded in 1534, established a new uniformity of faith and discipline. The controverted questions of forty years were replaced by definite dogmas.

That the Church at large should refuse obedience to this strictly Roman Council was defended on the ground that it wanted the Œcumenical marks. It was not summoned by Christian kings, but by the Bishop of Rome; it did not represent even half Europe, nor any part of the great Oriental Church; and in its second session France, attached to its Gallican, like England to its Anglican, liberties, refused to join. We may add to the English settlement of this date
1570. Elizabeth's much-needed establishment of the Universities on the Collegiate system, by which she put the finishing-stroke to the Tudor policy of making them the vehicles for spreading the influence of the clergy, and for educating the officers of the State as well as the learned professions.

Thus she met the new position taken up by the English Papists, who were no longer allowed by the Pope to attend public worship in the churches of England; and, as people soon found out, met it not at all too early. The Massacre of St Bartholomew's Day (1572) sent a thrill through Europe, felt even at this distance of time; but so far from answering its diabolical purpose, it had the effect of arousing everywhere that great undecided class which is so slow to move under ordinary circumstances. It opened up to sight the gulf into which England was designed to fall under a general combination of the Papal Powers, and began to raise up around Eliza-

beth an army of voluntary guards by whom all the machinations of her enemies were one after the other successfully met. It also set her on a line of immediate foreign policy which sorely puzzled her subjects till its object was attained.

In the very year of the Massacre the Dutch commenced, by the capture of Brill, their career of avowed and open independence. What so proper as that the English should support them against their tyrants? But Elizabeth did nothing of the kind for years; she professed to disapprove of insurrections, made a Treaty with the sanguinary Duke of Alva, and debarred the Dutch from entering English ports. The cause of her strange action was this. William the Silent was leaning upon the French for support. Elizabeth not only disapproved of the Dutch coast, so near England, becoming French, but she saw the opportunity of setting Spain against France. In fact she detached both Alva and his successor, Requesens, from the formidable list of her enemies, while she benefited the Dutch by setting the new Spanish governor on the policy of conciliation and mercy,—thus giving them breathing-time in the pause of their terrible struggle. 1572.

In the third of our periods the queen reaped the fruit of her acute diplomacy. The Hispano-French League found that its violent courses had failed, and Pope Gregory, at its head, gave the word to proceed more cautiously. Not however less resolutely; but the weapon to be used was of a more scientific kind than the wars and massacres which had only exasperated the Protestants of Europe. That weapon was the new Order of Jesuits. Their courage, ability, and devotion could alone, he believed, bend the stubborn neck of Protestantism, and destroy the obstinate woman who was now at the head of it. In France and Germany they were set to work at the education of the young; for the attack upon England they were now definitely prepared by the rigorous discipline of the English Colleges in Flanders. The Pope gave it to be understood everywhere that as soon as all was ready the word should be given for the attack upon Elizabeth. Thus England also had its breathing-time, which lasted longer than that of the Dutch. That gallant people, in spite of the better will of Requesens and Don John of Austria, soon found themselves goaded into the open revolt 1572-1580.

which brought on the Spanish massacre called the "Antwerp Fury," and ended with the "Declaration of Independence" in 1581. The English queen soon interfered openly on their side with ships, troops, and money, and transferred to herself the terror and hatred of exasperated Spain; but her position at home was greatly strengthened by her capture of Edinburgh in aid of Regent Morton, and by his co-operation the Scottish partisans of Mary were now nearly extinguished.

1580-1588. Thus our fourth period commences in 1580 with a fairly united, and at least strongly governed, people in all the three kingdoms. A common danger was however required in order to weld them together, and for eight years they were sufficiently exposed to it. In the above year the devoted forlorn-hope of the Jesuits received their orders from Cardinal Allen, their chief at Douay, and made their way into England with the express purpose of rousing the people against their queen, while a force of Italians and Spaniards made its way into Ireland. These last were easily dealt with, but both islands were now virtually in a state of war, and those who could not support the queen were of course placed under restraint. Parliament imposed Penal Statutes on Papists; and Parsons and Campion, the two leaders of the Papal emissaries, after repeated warnings, suffered the death of traitors, with many more, both before and after the defeat of the Armada.

The parallel Jesuit movements in countries where Romanists were still strong, such as South Germany, Ireland, and the Netherlands, were far more successful—a fact which, as Ranke says, enhances Elizabeth's merits in saving England, Scotland, and Holland; but her personal danger grew so intense that the famous sworn Association of the great mass of the gentry of England and the middle classes was formed in 1584 for her defence. This very soon led to the ejection of the Jesuits from English shores as *eo nomine* traitors, and that led to the Babington conspiracy, into which Mary was entrapped by Walsingham. Of this we have said enough. When the news of her execution reached Philip his rage knew no bounds. He now threw all policy to the winds, and resolved to use the combined forces of his whole empire in the destruction of the heretic queen and nation. Eliza-

beth at first strove vainly to stop the threatened Armada by her old arts. It was fortunate that she had a better weapon to her hand in Sir Francis Drake.

All through the reign this gallant seaman had been preparing for the work reserved for him, and he now comes to the front. His attack on Cadiz—"singeing the King of Spain's beard," as he called it—delayed the attack for a whole year; and when the Armada came at last Philip found his closest combinations good for nothing in the face of facts. The Dutch fleet blocked up Parma's flotilla all along their coast, and not one of the English Papists, whom the Jesuits had assured Philip would rise, obeyed the call. Never in the history of the world was seen such a cheap defence of a nation from a powerful invader—cheap, indeed, to the point of a reprehensible parsimony—but even without the storm it would probably have been sufficient. Elizabeth's policy was to call out her subjects' resources and so to spare the taxes, to do nothing in a hurry, and let time work for her. It is easy to ridicule it. Her very faults worked for her success—her pride, her vanity, her ostentation. All this was nothing as against her courage, her royal bearing, her thorough personal knowledge of her subjects, derived from her constant "Progresses," her power of inspiring chivalrous devotion. Hear her address to her troops: "Let tyrants fear. I have always so behaved myself that, under God, I have always placed my chiefest strength and safeguard in the loyal hearts and goodwill of my subjects. And, therefore, I am come among you, as you see, resolved, in the midst and heat of the battle, to live and die amongst you all."

It is true that the battle was already won, but she did not know it. The defeat of the Armada, admirably described by Mr Froude, commenced a new chapter of English history. The manner in which England and her allies emerged out of this tremendous conflict is itself sufficient answer to the charges of vacillation, half-heartedness, and finessing diplomacy—a diplomacy heartlessly pursued, as it is said, all the while that her allies were being destroyed.

Our fifth period exhibits the great queen triumphantly paying back upon her foes the insults and injuries she had been receiving for thirty years. Henri IV., her ally, at the critical moment of struggle for kingship on the death of 1588-1596.

Henri III., at once received efficient aid under Lord Willoughby; and a great expedition, under Essex, Norris, and Drake, was launched against Spain. The success of the last was only partial; but, in 1596, another and much more successful one captured Cadiz and destroyed Philip's resources. Spain was never afterwards really formidable. Her period of grandeur had lasted little more than a single century.

The efforts of Elizabeth to order her realm on the basis of the Via Media, as desired by the great mass of her people, brought her into conflict in this period with the extreme section of Reformers, the seditious "Brownists," who were violently opposed to the Government, and who may be taken to represent the first organised Dissenters from the Elizabethan Establishment. The idea which marked those times, that uniformity of religion must be preserved at any price, found a specious justification in the danger to which sovereigns and governments were exposed from the extreme parties on either side. Elizabeth's life was attempted over and over again, but she never slept the worse for any of these alarms. This fearlessness her subjects admired, but resented. Her life was too precious, too necessary, to be thrown away.

Elizabeth swore, lied, and flirted. Her religion could not, therefore, be considered of a very high type; but we must remember that the coarseness of the Middle Ages was not yet refined by the better habits of the new Anglicanism. If her religion had been more practical, we should not have had that gloomy picture of her dying hours which we can never forget.

1596–1603. In our sixth and last period the repose of the country after all it had passed through takes the place of war, danger, and triumph. Leicester's death in 1588, and Burleigh's in 1598, had left the great queen, already prematurely aged, alone and unfriended to support the cares which they had shared with her. Her other ministers held quite a different place. Her unwise but very natural and pardonable fondness for Essex, a more chivalrous, and in some respects more interesting, character than Raleigh, produced its inevitable consequence. Philip's second Armada in 1598, the last act of his terrible career, gave her but little trouble. It would have been worthily encountered if a storm had not once again scattered the costly enterprise. Great measures gild

the ending of a glorious reign. The East India Company, the outcome of Tudor commercial prosperity, began its great career in 1600. The conquest of Ireland was at last completed by Mountjoy, the fifth of the queen's generals whose successive labours broke down at last the ever-recurring insurrections which had rendered government impossible, and offered a fulcrum for foreign leverage. Lastly, she knew how to give way when the repeal of monopolies (which she did not invent) was demanded by the growing trade which they had fettered. The reign had been glorious in every sense, not least in the training it had afforded to great minds who raised English literature to the highest pitch it ever attained. What a variety of greatness is contained in the common phrase, "the Elizabethan Age"!

To Elizabeth herself these last days were embittered by the natural persistence of the nation in requiring her to declare her successor. Even old age did not protect her from importunity to provide herself with a husband. It was not mere pride or obstinacy which made her resent the prospect of being succeeded by James VI. of Scotland, the only possible person. To her great nature such a prince appeared perfectly contemptible, and her vast experience told her pretty clearly what must come of it. It was disagreeable to know that her courtiers were all pledged to him, but she would let things take their course. She could not prevent his accession, but she would have no hand in it. She was the only sufferer. All tumults were hushed. Her policy was the main cause of a most peaceful succession, almost unheard of in the founder of a new dynasty. It was her last patriotic service.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE STUARTS: JAMES I. (1603–1625).

THE epithet usually applied to the Stuart family is "the unfortunate." It is perfectly just, but not complete. The English Fitzalans who became Stewards to the old Scot-

tish kings, and then, in Edward III.'s reign, by the marriage of Walter Stuart with Margery, daughter of Robert Bruce, kings themselves, were, though sometimes most undeservedly, proverbially unfortunate in Scotland; and the four who span the seventeenth century in England, with whom we are now concerned, were quite as much open to that description. This was partly owing to the times in which their lot was cast. So far they were unfortunate; but their failure was much more due to themselves. It is well worthy of remark that precisely the same causes of failure may be traced in each of the three generations of Stuart kings of England. In other words, each of the four left the same mark of self-imposed disaster on his home, his foreign, and his ecclesiastical policy.

All, for example, copied the Tudors in their arbitrary government, and attempted to dispense with Parliaments, but in a more pronounced manner, and regardless of the changes which were taking place. Since they fully believed that it was their duty to retain every particle of the power which they had inherited with the Crown, this serious error might possibly have admitted of a remedy if it had not been for their policy towards the Church. The favour they all showed to the Roman Catholics at home and abroad began with a humane sentiment in favour of relieving them from penalties imposed on them for their political religion. But these had been necessitated by their own conduct and that of the Popes, in the reign of Elizabeth. The Stuarts adopted a plan of extending or withdrawing their favour as it suited their convenience, and in the third generation ended by joining the Roman Communion. This course of action was closely connected with a bitter personal hatred of Presbyterianism, first imbibed in Scotland by James I., who handed it down to his descendants. It was also intimately connected with the untenable claim to the Divine Right of Kings, which James and his family adopted from the Laudian school amongst the clergy, and which formed a portion of the system formulated under the title of the Divine Right of Bishops. Even this domestic and ecclesiastical policy might have failed to insure that the Stuarts should be swept out of England, if it had not been combined with an appropriate but ruinous foreign policy, pursued in all four reigns in diametrical

opposition to the instincts which had been formed by the English people during the whole course of their history.

In the case of James I., his foreign policy sprang from a good motive, as did his conduct to the Romanists. It embodied the idea of "*Beati Pacifici*," his favourite motto, —absurdly applied. With regard to both Spain and the Palatinate, his whole course of proceeding was equally mean and unworthy. It did much to destroy his dynasty. The foreign policy of Charles I. was even more crooked and false. That of Charles's two sons in succession issued in mere shame and disgrace. In short, we can attribute the forbearance of the country to nothing but the ingrained sense of the necessity of an hereditary sovereignty to the wellbeing of the nation, impressed upon several generations by the Wars of the Roses and the Dictatorships of Henry VIII. and Elizabeth. So deeply was it rooted, that the life even of Charles I. would have been spared, had it not been for the predominance of the army which had overthrown his forces; and it was quite vengeance enough to satisfy the nation that the incorrigible James II. should be expelled from its shores. The loyalty and good sense of the people were proved by their acceptance of the junior branch of the family in William, Mary, and Anne, so long as they accepted conditions of policy exactly opposite to those which had guided the elder branch. What were these? (1) They were to govern the country on constitutional principles, by and with Parliaments. (2) They were to support the Church of England loyally as against Rome and Romanism. (3) They were to resume and maintain the hereditary, established place of England in continental politics, and to this end, keep the British Islands firmly united. They accepted and stood honourably by these principles. What is more, they passed them on to the Hanoverian branch of their House which succeeded them. These principles are still the basis of British Government.

JAMES I. (1603–1625).

The strongly marked character which King James I. impressed on his descendants was derived from his unlucky birth, his pedantic education, and his twenty-five years' ex-

perience as King of Scotland, during which he was under the domination of a Presbyterian system, the ideal government of which was Theocracy. All this we must suppose to be familiar, but his literary eminence is not generally considered as much as its importance demands. He had written his chief book, 'Basilicon Doron,' just before he succeeded, at the age of thirty-seven, the great Elizabeth, and it powerfully aided his cordial reception by the English. It is, like some of his other books, full of clever, often wise, thoughts, which, speaking generally, contrast most absurdly with his acts; a characteristic which came out in a different way, according to the witty doggerel, in Charles II. Of the remarkable vigour of the literary side of James's life an excellent account will be found in 'Casaubon's Life,' by Mark Pattison; in Oglander's 'Memoirs' an impartial view of his general character, by one who knew him; and from the social point of view we have a picture drawn by the masterly hand of Scott in the 'Fortunes of Nigel.' We have now also the interesting modern history of Mr Gardiner.

The reign lends itself easily to a division into three
1603–1612. periods. (1) From 1603 to 1612,—the administration of Burleigh's son, Robert Cecil, Earl of Salisbury; (2) From
1612–1619. 1612 to 1619, when James was his own minister, and the mere dupe of Gondomar, the Spanish ambassador; (3) The
1619–1625. downfall of Government, connected with George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, and with the two reforming Parliaments.

If we are to keep a due proportion of events in this reign we must not dwell on the conspiracy with which it opened in favour of Arabella Stuart, Darnley's niece, though it brought the romantic career of Raleigh to an end a few years later, nor upon the Hampton Court Conference, in which the first opening for conciliating the Nonconformist party was thrown away. It was now that James made his alliance with the bishops on the principle of mutual support against Presbyterianism and Puritanism, and on the common claim of Divine Right. It was now also that he discovered that the feeling of the English against Roman Catholics had by no means died out since their struggle against the late queen, and that he must sanction an anti-Jesuit policy which belied

his former expressions of friendship, and led to the Gunpowder Plot in 1605. That Plot left effects which coloured the history of the whole century; for it necessitated the imposition of the Oath of Allegiance, and the Penal Laws. James's own defence of the Oath ought to be read. Perhaps the most obvious excuse for a system which in quiet times would be unwarrantable, is that it broke up the English Romanists into two distinct sections, and so far effected its purpose of destroying the dangerous character of their principles. The National section took the Oath, and were only subject to the Penal Laws, which they evaded by compounding: the Ultramontanes rendered themselves liable to perpetual imprisonment, and forfeiture, during life, of rents and goods. It was simply a question of civil obedience, the trouble which conscientious men inherited from evil times. If they could not give way, it was certain that the State could not.

The efforts of the Roman Catholic Powers, as represented by Spain, were now once more directed to sap the fortress which they could no longer hope to take by storm. Gondomar, the most astute of ambassadors, was supplied with ample funds, and proceeded, as soon as James made peace, which he lost no time in doing, to bribe all his principal ministers. Even Cecil, whose career places him far below his father, was one of these; while James was kept for many years in entire ignorance of the ignominious tricks thus played upon him, and soon became the mere tool of Spain. The Spanish minister reported that the English were to be bought and sold just as if they were so many shopkeepers. The arbitrary notions of government thus insidiously instilled, and falling on a well-prepared soil, showed themselves in the king's treatment of his first Parliament, to which he refused its just claim of Privilege; and in many ways he assumed an attitude of independence which alienated all sympathy between it and himself. It is true that he may be said to have inherited this position as a legacy from the Tudors, but we may well suspect that they would have discovered some method of working the royal prerogative which would have suited the times. To the Stuarts such insight was impossible. The Parliament of 1604 did however succeed in abolishing the Tudor abuse of Proclamations; and the influence of

Cecil, along with the popularity of the promising young Prince Henry, staved off the coming troubles for a time. But they both died in 1612, and the breach between king and people began to widen.

It was not James's fault that the revenues of the Crown had not been placed on a proper footing by the exchange of the obsolete feudal dues for a fixed sum of £200,000. This was the "Great Contract," and it might possibly have saved the dynasty, but the seeds of distrust were already sown. The actual cause of the Dissolution of Parliament was that it insisted on throwing open the Church pulpits to Nonconformists, which was a distinct breach of the Establishment; but James's compact with the bishops had alarmed the country, and this had been one of its earliest consequences. His proceedings with the Scottish Church had been especially obnoxious. As King of Scotland he had, in 1592, been quite unable to prevent the establishment of Presbyterianism; but as king of both countries he used his power to re-establish bishops, whom he had ordered to be consecrated by English bishops in England. Soon afterwards he forced upon the Scottish Church the "Five Articles of Perth,"—kneeling at the Eucharist, Confirmation, certain holidays, &c. It only remained to force an Anglican Liturgy on the people, which Charles I. did, with disastrous consequences. All this was well meant by James and the bishops who advised him, but absolutely tyrannical. It was a century too late to turn the scale; but the ideas of English Church and State were never extinguished in Scotland, and though entertained by only a minority, often an insignificant minority, have borne fruit,—not only amongst Scottish Episcopalians but within the Presbyterian body itself.

The credit of procuring the noble translation of the Bible which we still enjoy must be shared between the king and his advisers on the one hand, and the Puritans on the other, for it was their demand at Hampton Court. But the attempt of James to bring about the Union of England and Scotland must always be placed to his own credit; so also his colonisation of Ulster, which secured the loyalty of one part at least of Ireland, though at the expense of some injustice. His enlightened colonisation of North America requires no qualification, nor his effort to make peace between Spain and

Holland, nor his printed defence of the English Church in his "Premonition," one of the best ever put forth. Bacon obtains vast credit for having aspired to these things. James did them; but most of his work was marred by his want of judgment in the execution.

The death of Cecil opens our second period, just after the dissolution of Parliament in 1611. For fifty years no Parliament was ever again in accord with a King of England. The Puritans now took sides against the Crown. Who were the men known by this name? Great errors have arisen from the confusion of the word "Puritans" with that of "Nonconformists," and to speak of the England of 1603 to 1660 as "Puritan England" is a mere exaggeration. It was a title given to the school of churchmen who in Elizabeth's reign, and in that of James still more, opposed that form of churchmanship which obtained the strange name of "Arminianism." Of the latter school Bancroft and Laud were the leaders and representatives; of the former Coke, Selden, Digges, and Eliot, all attached churchmen, who claimed to represent the original Elizabethan Establishment as distinguished from the development of it which had grown up in the last years of the queen and the early years of her successor. The violence of those in power drove very many of the Puritans into Nonconformity, which gradually became more marked under the name of "Dissent." That the Great Rebellion gave them the upper hand for a short time, does not stamp the two reigns as the period of "Puritan England." 1612-1619.

James had been informed by Digby, his ambassador at Madrid, that all his ministers were pensioners of Spain. He now resolved to be his own minister, and hoped he had found in Carr, whom he foolishly made Earl of Rochester, a servant who would usefully share his labours. But this vicious youth had not even the qualifications of the more brilliant Buckingham, who, soon rising to be the new favourite, brought the Stuart family to ruin. The country was by no means prepared to recall the times of Piers Gaveston. Yet it must be said that in spite of gross scandals and gloomy presages James contrived to arrest the ruin for some years. His attempts at managing and controlling a second Parliament in 1614, and its dissolution in two months, which gave

it the name of the "Addled Parliament," did not yet rouse the country, which, however, was nursing its displeasure at the renewal of the old Benevolences, so often resisted and withdrawn. But the Thirty Years' War broke out in 1618, and this finally wrecked the feeble Government. Still further, in 1619, James, in pursuit of his Spanish policy, gave up the "cautionary towns," which had been placed under the protection of the English after Elizabeth's interference in the Low Countries.

This act and the execution of Raleigh (1618), who was looked upon as the last living relic of Elizabethan greatness, produced that settled sense of degradation which makes a people dangerous to its rulers. The faults of Raleigh had been condoned in view of his merits and his hard fate. People knew his courage in battle, his enterprise, foresight, eloquence, his zeal for colonisation, his practical ability united to great literary power and industry. Elizabeth's paladins were sure to possess superior qualities. But he had also the serious defects so common in that age, of unscrupulous habits in the pursuit of wealth, and an intriguing temper which often made him false, of vanity, luxury, and ambition. Perhaps against his abject craving for life at both his trials and his attempt at suicide we may place his fine behaviour on the scaffold—in short, we have a mixed character, like that of many others of even superior mould to Raleigh.

Disgusted with the hollow "king-craft" and contemptible foreign policy of James, the more brave and enterprising of his subjects in both kingdoms rushed abroad by hundreds to the support of the Elector Palatine and his English wife, the first victims of the Papist Powers in the Thirty Years' War. Foolish as the Elector's conduct was, and wise as James's advice, the English could not bear to see him destroyed before their eyes. Here it was, and under Gustavus Adolphus, that the gallant volunteers learnt the art of war, and the settled resolution that the country should not be Romanised without an appeal to arms. Their disgust with James was not diminished by the discovery that all their efforts were neutralised by his crooked policy, under the inspiration of Gondomar, who had learnt to play upon him as upon some instrument. It was his vacillation and folly that enabled the cunning Spaniard to report to his Government that they

might do what they pleased, as they had nothing to fear from England.

Perhaps it is the best excuse for Charles's fatal career that he was growing to manhood under domestic and political circumstances of a degrading kind; his father incurring general contempt, and Gondomar governing his foreign policy, the vicious Buckingham supreme at court, Parliaments suppressed, Laud undermining the two archbishops, and gradually becoming the leading ecclesiastic of the period, his own mother a secret Romanist, Coke in disgrace, and Bacon, the gifted philosopher, acting against his own principles in a course of meanness which could not but lead to his celebrated fall and distressing eclipse. Thus he was bred up in the worst possible school. Hating Puritanism, his inclinations were for a Roman Catholic wife, who had no small share in his ruin, and though, to his great credit, clear of the commonest vice of princes, he grew up a skilful casuist who missed the one best mark of a gentleman, straightforward truthfulness.

In the third period the downfall of the Government could not but be rapid and headlong, for it was on every point in direct conflict with the wishes of the people. Yet, in 1621, James thought he might humour them by calling a Parliament and obtaining supplies for a war in defence of the Palatinate. For a moment he was popular; but Gondomar's policy soon prevailed. His illegal act in setting free the "Papist recusants" betrayed the king's intentions, and it was soon plain that there was no reality in his pretence of a Protestant war. Now it was that Pym came to the front, and, with his friends, organised a scheme of resistance and reform. They attacked monopolies, impeached Bacon, and launched a "Protestation" against the king's interference with parliamentary liberty of speech. James, in a fury, dissolved his Third Parliament, and imprisoned Pym, Coke, and others. Elizabeth had acted thus; but a new generation could not brook it from James Stuart. 1619–1625.

Yet James died in his bed. He was obliged to undergo the humiliation of calling yet one more Parliament to relieve his necessities, now intolerable. This was in 1624, after the foolish expedition of "Baby Charles" and "Steenie" to Spain. The discovery that the Spanish would only allow of

the match with the Infanta on conditions which England would not hear of, since they simply meant the reversal of the Reformation, turned the minds of the two youths into the channel of a Spanish war of revenge, not in the least more respectable than James's alliance. Parliament was not, however, in a humour to throw itself even into the desired war unless it could insure a rational administration of affairs, and the miserable monarch died just when it had removed from his counsels by impeachment the last but one of his corrupt officials, Cranfield, Earl of Middlesex. Buckingham, indeed, remained the quarry for the next attack, and was destined to be the ruin of his young master. Just then, also, as if waiting for the disappearance of James, appeared at last a Protestant leader of the continental Protestants, Christian IV. of Denmark, to be succeeded very shortly by Gustavus Adolphus, "the Lion of the North."

CHAPTER XX.

CHARLES I. (1625–1649).

THE pendulum of opinion no longer oscillates in a violent swing from the idolatry of Charles to detestation of him. Foreign writers first set it at rest, — Guizot and Ranke. We have now an historian of our own, Mr Gardiner, whose minute researches leave us no excuse for indulging in extreme views on either side, though we are by no means called upon to relinquish the right of independent judgment upon admitted premisses. We have looked at Charles as prince, and found a rare phenomenon, a moral and religious man, yet steeped in duplicity. This prepares us for strong contrasts, and we find them throughout his career, in peace and war. His affection for the Church of England was indisputable—in a sense he died for the Episcopate; and yet he had deceived his opponents so often that he was reckoned utterly untrustworthy. This is not to say that his conscience may not, under a system of casuistry, have acquitted

him. So much the worse for the casuistry. Like all the Stuarts, he knew how to bear adversity better than prosperity. If we are to accept the 'Eikon Basilike' as even in any degree his own, or, at any rate, as representing him on the whole, we have a saintly man, hunted down by implacable persecutors. No doubt he learnt by adversity; and Charles the Martyr was a very different man from the Charles of Buckingham and Laud. We have seen how his training fell in with the want of judgment which came with his blood. His whole life was a series of mistakes; but there was no mistake about the grandeur of his death.

Again we divide the reign into three periods;—the first, from 1625 to 1629, marked, like his father's, by the rapid decline of the Tudor-Stuart position in each of the three Parliaments which continued the process of the former reign. The second is the period of tyranny, a government without Parliaments for eleven years, — 1629-1640. The third includes the final contest with Parliament, which ended in the war, and the execution of the king in 1649. 1625-1629. 1629-1640. 1640-1649.

The three Parliaments of the first period carry the same characteristics. The king vainly attempts to do two opposite things,—to use the prerogative as if independent of Parliament, and at the same time to obtain supplies which Parliament alone could grant, and would only grant upon redress of grievances. Pym, at the head of the Opposition, represented the Constitution. The particular grievance of the country was the religious policy of James and Charles. The Government "must satisfy the House that a disposition exists to remedy just complaints in matters of religion." The king could have appealed to the nation against the House, but he dared not. He preferred to silence the nation, to punish the Opposition, to carry his innovations by force, and to let the people get accustomed to them. Dissolution followed dissolution. The Parliament of 1626 followed that of 1625. So only was the impeachment of Buckingham stopped,—violently stopped.

What did the nation mean by its quarrel with the king's religious policy? It complained (1) of the illegal connivance at "Popish recusants," a matter for the Parliament which had imposed the oath of allegiance, not for the king or any one else to order without Parliament; (2) of the terms

of the marriage between the king and Henrietta Maria of France, which introduced the dreaded Romanism into the heart of the citadel; (3) of the favour shown by James and Charles in turn to what were called "innovations," and semi-Roman doctrines, as shown by the unblushing preferment of Montagu and others, under Laud's patronage. All the leaders in these Parliaments had brought with them the bitter feelings produced by the conduct of James towards themselves, and were determined to bring the contest to a point.[1]

Charles now adopted the expedition to the island of Rhé, under Buckingham and Sir John Burroughs, with the hope of giving the people something else to think about; but its egregious failure made matters worse, and in addition gave mortal offence to Richelieu, who knew how to avenge it, when the time arrived, by stirring up the Great Rebellion. The third Parliament, in 1628, was the Parliament of Eliot and Wentworth, the Parliament of the ever-famous Petition of Right, the modern Magna Charta. The tyrannical conduct of Charles in imprisoning Members of Parliament, and his numerous assaults on "the liberty of the person," united the whole of the members in one bond. It worked with a single and united will, and forced the king to yield. Their first step was Eliot's "Remonstrance," the forerunner of the "Grand Remonstrance" of 1641, accusing Buckingham as the prime cause of all their wrongs. The second was the Petition of Right, the chief point of which was to secure the persons of all who refused to pay taxes or other demands for which no consent of Parliament had been given. To this petition Charles forced himself to accede, in order to save his favourite from the attacks of the "Remonstrance." He obtained five subsidies in return for his consent; but London had now taken up the quarrel upon "religion," and the Parliament became so embittered on this question that the Remonstrance was after all proceeded with. Dr Lamb was murdered as an associate of Buckingham's, and he himself would hardly have escaped, had he not fallen at Portsmouth, the victim of Felton. Thus ended the mischievous career of one who had governed James and Charles more

[1] See for this and subsequent references to the subject, 'Parliament and the Church of England.' (Seeley.)

absolutely, and for a longer time, than any royal favourite in English history. He had his place. It was to hasten the removal of all obstructions to the renovation of the Constitution.

When Parliament reassembled in 1629, the attacks on the Laudian *régime* were redoubled. The special object of attack was the "Declaration," recently prefixed to the Articles of the Church of England by Charles, under Laud's advice, without any authority from Convocation or Parliament. This was a thoroughly unconstitutional document, and ought never to have been bound up in our Prayer-book, as it is,—no one can say by what authority. A careful study of the documents of the time will make the grounds of the parliamentary opposition to it perfectly clear. Parliament claimed the guardianship of the Establishment as fixed by the Legislature under the three Tudor monarchs. To that the nation had consented, and three generations had been brought up and matured in it. Parliament saw in the "Declaration" of 1628, put out by Charles and Laud, the marks of a change from a Reformation on the primitive model to a new reformation on a medieval model. They interpreted the claim of the king to act in matters of religion on his own responsibility by his acts, by his placing in high office Sibthorp, Mainwaring, and Montagu, by the significant changes which had been introduced in various dioceses by Laud, Neile, and Cosin, by the favour openly shown to Romanists, and by the notorious influence of the queen over her uxorious husband. Worked into a fury by the king's threats, Parliament was dissolved while in the very act of passing Eliot's resolution against all "unauthorised innovations," but the trembling Speaker was held down in his chair by Holles and Valentine till it was passed. Then the doors were opened; Charles instantly dissolved the Parliament, making it "presumption for any to prescribe any time unto us for Parliaments." He had had enough of them. He would now govern without them, throwing himself on the judges, who were removable at pleasure, for legal authority to do what Parliament, if sitting, would not have permitted him to do.

We enter then upon our second period, the eleven years of tyranny. It must be considered a distinct justification of the Great Rebellion. If the king's duty to summon Parlia- 1629–1640.

ments is abused by neglect, it is for the subjects to take measures to right themselves. The doctrine of resistance, in case of any breach of recognised rights, was a fundamental portion of the feudal system, as old, indeed, as the Teuton inheritance, but formulated under the Normans. Every man had thus his remedy for every wrong. The Divine Right of Kings to do wrong was a modern fiction, like the Divine Right of Bishops. The nation had never accepted it. Charles himself, who had a dim sense that the Episcopate could not be defended upon the grounds asserted by his party, based, when hard pressed, his chief claim for its retention upon political expediency. The political doctrine of the Right of Resistance fell for a time into the background at the Restoration; but the slavish arguments for Passive Obedience never survived the attacks of Shaftesbury and Locke, and gradually disappeared from sight after the reign of Queen Anne.

During all this second period Charles was busily engaged in destroying what little respect remained for that "divinity" which was still supposed to "hedge a king," by his unspeakably foolish foreign policy. It was, if possible, worse than that of his father, for he actually contrived to be at war with France and Spain both at once, without any navy at his back, and seemed to suppose, like James, that the letters in which he lectured and scolded his enemies would recover the Palatinate without troops. In return for the advantages they had gained by war, he had nothing to offer them but a goodwill which they naturally ridiculed. When at last he created, by means of the illegal Ship-money, a royal navy, which turned out to be useful enough under the Commonwealth, he did not know what to do with it. Gustavus Adolphus formed the greatest contempt for the king whose help he had a right to expect, and failing to obtain it, turned to Richelieu, who knew very well what to do. Between them they succeeded in thrusting back the Austrian House from the Rhine. Even after Charles made peace in 1630 with France and Spain, his policy ascended no higher than to humour Spain by plots against Holland, England's natural ally under the circumstances, and next year to intrigue with the Netherlands against Spain. Thus it came to pass that the English Government soon possessed neither friend nor ally; and Richelieu received his final impulse to set Charles's

subjects against him by the king's refusal to join him and the Dutch in assisting those very people of the Netherlands with whom he had been intriguing against their tyrants.

A very few words will sum up the domestic events of the "Tyranny." The leaders of the last Parliament had been imprisoned for doing their duty, and Eliot died in prison. That was felt to be virtually a murder. Proclamations once more were declared to have the force of laws; monopolies were once more granted; fines for refusing to take up knighthood, which had become obsolete, were now again enforced. In short, everything seemed about to return to medievalism in Church and State. The new system was worked by three distinct bodies, which, nevertheless, exercised their abused functions through the same men, or all but the same, placed in each. These were the Council, the Star-Chamber, and the High Commission Court. Thus there were no means of escape. All sorts of iniquitous fines and punishments were inflicted in these courts, and by these contemptible methods the Government was kept going; while, as if to emphasise the sense of wrong, enormous sums were raised for the rebuilding of St Paul's Cathedral, which had been destroyed by fire. In 1632 the obsolete Forest Laws were mercilessly revived, and encroachments, of however long a standing, resumed by the Crown. Richmond and Rockingham Forests were the most notorious cases. The Roman Nuncio now lived regularly in London, and his house became the natural centre for proselytising operations, which were only too successful, and a focus for conspiracies against the National Church. Charles and Laud were too well instructed to yield to this propaganda in their own persons, though the latter must have given great hopes, or he would hardly have had sent to him a cardinal's hat. But they minimised the differences between the two Communions, and others took advantage of their attitude. Panzani's 'Memoirs' still exist to show how the negotiations were only broken off on the question of the Deposing Power.

A certain measure of apparent success prevented Charles and his short-sighted advisers from perceiving the gulf opening wide before them. Wentworth's adhesion to the Government seemed to promise great things. He succeeded in building up an organised tyranny in Ireland on the principle

of "Thorough," a word which now passed between him and Laud to represent what was required, and this encouraged the proceedings in Scotland which began the Rebellion. Nothing could have been more ill-judged than the attempt to complete James's efforts to force the Scots into Episcopacy by means of a new Liturgy and Ritual. The Dictatorship of the Tudor princes in England had been based on the passionate will of all the leading portions of the people, who had for centuries been contending with Rome. The interference of the Stuarts in Scotland was based upon the wish of the king against the pronounced desire of a people whose reform had been a revolution, every step of which had become the more endeared to them by the opposition of their sovereign and his English advisers. The story of the failure requires no illustration in this sketch. It put arms into the hands of men who knew how to use them, and who worshipped the cause for which they armed.

England was slower to move. Hampden's resistance to Ship-money took place in 1637, the same year in which the Scottish tumults began. The next year was signalised by the famous "Covenant," of which a great deal more was soon to be heard, and in the next, when a formidable Scottish army invaded England in open alliance with France, the king finds he has no army to resist them. These are the old-English, well-known symptoms of dissolution. At this point the nation has always found it necessary to interpose in order to prevent ruin, and to reduce the sovereign
1640. to terms. In 1640 the "Short" Parliament was forced on Charles, and though its action was perfectly constitutional, immediately dismissed. The Council of Peers, summoned by way of substitute, proved a broken reed; and nothing was left for the king but to discard the policy of "Thorough" and summon a Free Parliament. This was his Fifth, or the "Long" Parliament. It was, of course, instantly flooded by petitions from the numerous sufferers under the tyranny, and Strafford was at once prosecuted as the minister who had misled the king.

We now understand Strafford better than of old. He was no apostate, but in politics always a constitutional monarchist, hating Buckingham, while resolved to keep the Crown an effective power; in religion a High Churchman and hater of

Puritans. Yet he was drawn into courses as bad as those of Buckingham, and still more alienated from the people. We can neither sympathise with him nor his enemies. It was a revolution, and his was necessarily the first head to fall. But nothing can excuse the king for signing the attainder. It was his own death-warrant; and if we are not deceived, it was his own queen who, by persuading him, was the cause of it. On the other point which arose at the same time,—the demand of Parliament that the king should relinquish his constitutional power of Dissolution,—the ready assent of the king to that fatal act has been best accounted for by supposing that he was only temporising, and that he meant to cancel it as soon as he was strong enough.

Up to August 1641 it has been said that the famous Long Parliament did not pass the bounds of moderation. This requires that, whatever we may think of the attainder of Strafford, or the fining and imprisonment of Laud, the impeachment of the five judges who had voted for Ship-money, and of the thirteen bishops who had passed the illegal Canons of 1640, we should rank these parliamentary measures among those which were absolutely necessary for the recovery of the hold of that body on the Constitution. We could not, of course, disapprove of the abolition of the Star-Chamber, High Commission, and Forest Courts, which had been so mischievous, nor of the rescinding of the illegal duties; we could not object to the change of the judges' tenure of office from "the king's pleasure" to "life," nor even, under the circumstances, to Triennial Parliaments. But we arrive at the limits of regular government when Committees of Parliament are appointed to serve with the full powers of Parliament itself. This took place in September 1641. It was Richard II.'s tyranny exercised by Parliament.

Perceiving that the crisis had arrived, Charles had in August visited Scotland in order to encourage his feeble party there; but at that moment Ireland blazed up in a barbarous insurrection, brought on indirectly by Charles's own communications with some of the leaders. Now was the time when the moderate reformers — Falkland, Hyde, St John, and Colepepper—broke off from Pym, Hampden, and the "Root and Branch" men. These trusted counsellors at

once raised the king's position to an unexpected height, and representing large bodies of the people as they did, would apparently have worsted the Parliament had it not been for "King Pym," who now assumed the entire lead of the revolt. The abolition of Episcopacy, powerfully opposed by Falkland, was the rock of splitting.

A reaction in the king's favour was beginning to take
1641. place, led by London citizens, when Pym resolved, in December 1641, to appeal to the nation in what was called "the Grand Remonstrance." Was it generous, when the ground of complaint had been removed? Was it necessary, with a king who could not be trusted? Men had to make up their minds on this momentous question: it was life or death. And they were too much excited to think calmly. Matters had gone too far. Each side was aiming at the independent possession of a military force. War must decide. Now came the tumults excited by Pym, and the boisterous riots of the Cavaliers by way of reply, the imprisonment of the bishops in the Tower for making a protest against the proceedings of Parliament, the king's supremely foolish act in the beginning of the year 1642 in attempting to arrest the five Members, and all the preliminaries of war which filled up the spring and summer till Charles hoisted his standard at Not-
1642. tingham on August 22, 1642. The prompt seizure of Portsmouth, Hull, and the Tower of London had enabled Parliament to raise an army from the southern districts before July, which it placed under Essex, while Charles rallied round him the northern gentry; and Oxford, after some vicissitudes, became his trusty citadel, as London was from the first that of his enemies. England divided itself as usual, the south and east against the north and west, with, however, some remarkable exceptions. These will be best traced in May's 'History of the Long Parliament,' one of the very few contemporary books which is trustworthy, while Clarendon now becomes our chief authority. Putting aside the earlier part, which was written in later times, he is the one historian who can be ranked with Cæsar and Thucydides as a writer of the very first order, who also had taken part, or had knowledge first-hand, of the momentous events which he describes.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE WAR AND THE COMMONWEALTH.

PERHAPS there is nothing which exposes the difficulty of writing a concise history more than when its progress is arrested in the face of a series of battles and sieges in a civil war. We found it so in the wars of the Roses; but the difficulty is far greater when the date approaches our own times, when controversy regarding the actors on the stage is familiar to all, and when the principles at stake are so far beyond the mere interests of dynasty as in this case. All we can expect to do is to preserve this chapter from becoming a mere statement of names and dates by marking the causes of the ebb and flow of success, and grouping events in some sort of order, so as to facilitate the process of acquiring a complete knowledge of them.

In 1642 there was but one pitched battle, that of Edgehill, 1642.
fought on October 23—a drawn battle which differs from most in being readily understood on inspection of the site. It was here that Essex, son of Elizabeth's favourite, and trained in the continental wars, stopped Charles on his march from Shrewsbury to London, and forced him to fall back upon Oxford, while he himself pursued his march to the metropolis. Both sides found in this pitiful struggle of untutored battalions that they had much to learn in the art of war. In November the king moved again on London, and obtained a partial success at Brentford; but the London pikemen saved the day, and Essex again forced him to retire upon Oxford. The year 1643 opened with negotiations for peace at the University city, neither side having gained as yet any decisive advantage; but they came to nothing, and the junction of the queen, who had brought arms from Holland in exchange for the royal jewels, greatly encouraged the Royalists. Some minor successes of Essex and Waller were more than balanced by Prince Rupert's successful sally from Oxford, by which 1643.
Hampden was slain at Chalgrove. It is usual to connect his name with that of Falkland, who fell in this same year, as those of the chief heroes of the struggle. It is scarcely possible to compare them; but no act of Falkland ever

approached Hampden's resistance to Ship-money; nor was there any promise of generalship in the former such as shone conspicuously in the latter. Both made way for more famous men. As Pym's death soon brought his career to a close, Hampden seems to have been the only leader whose influence could have vied with that of Oliver Cromwell. So also Falkland's death left Hyde the undisputed chief adviser of the king, and after Charles's death the guardian of the Crown during its temporary abeyance.

The loyalty of the West Country now kindled into a flame, and under Sir Bevil Grenville their troops beat Waller at Lansdowne and Devizes, while Prince Rupert took the great city of Bristol, and the king formed the siege of Gloucester. This was the highest point reached by the Royalists, but Essex's relief of the city marked their decline. London took alarm, and was instantly fortified; and the Scots were besought to come to the help of the Parliament. In the next year they complied with the request, and that turned the scale. In September the first battle of Newbury, though strictly speaking a drawn battle, told in favour of the Parliament, but no military skill had yet displayed itself on either side. The time had not yet come for Cromwell, who alone had as yet shown a talent for organisation in the famous Association of the Eastern Counties. In the north the early success of Lord Newcastle had been followed by disaster at the hands of Lord Fairfax and his son. These also were soon to show military skill; while the Royalists lost the little discipline to which they had at first submitted, and fell, as Clarendon says, into "licence, disorder, and impiety." The issue could not be doubtful. Prince Rupert was little beyond a dashing cavalry officer, and the king himself exhibited more marks of generalship than any one else on his side. That is not to say much.

1644. The year 1644 opens with the king's Oxford Parliament, consisting of a large majority of the House of Peers, and about a third of the Commons. This was the best thing Charles could do, and it was a very characteristic mark of inbred English Constitutionalism; but both sides knew well enough that they were only playing with a sacred name. The parliamentary fiction that the dregs of a Parliament had any legal authority without the king, who rightly declared, "I

am a part of Parliament;" and the royal fiction that a part represented the whole, when the rest represented half the kingdom in rebellion,—were equally nugatory. The struggle was not to be decided by fictions, but by military skill, religious earnestness, and the command of funds. There were many excellent people on the king's side, but the Parliament developed an army of military enthusiasts who valued life as nothing in comparison with their cause. Cromwell was their representative, but the spirit was in no small degree the creation of the Stuart tyranny.

It is in the presence of that spirit, for the errors of which both sides were responsible, that we must place ourselves if we are to judge fairly the judges of Archbishop Laud. His trial now commenced, and he was condemned in November, but not executed till the next year. The significance of that act is only equalled by the execution of the king. Like that it was a most cruel and illegal act, which can only be justified by the tyrant's plea of necessity, and is discreetly passed over by headlong partisans of the Parliament. Judged by law, no crime worthy of death had been proved against Laud. His crimes were called high treason against the nation. In other words, he suffered because he had abused the forms of the Constitution in such a way as to result in a violation of the whole system of English government; while the true Constitutionalists had suffered imprisonment, mutilation, and judicial murder, directly or indirectly, at his hands. This is the best excuse. But he, the king, and Strafford were really the victims of revolutionary terror, the mortal alarm lest men who had proved themselves so capable of doing mischief should be alive to take vengeance if events turned in their favour.

Of Laud's personal goodness there has never been any reasonable doubt; and even those who disapprove of his Church policy acknowledge that he did good by restoring order in neglected churches, amongst an irregular clergy and unruly Universities. He was a real power for good as well as evil; but the position taken up by him and his friends must be carefully distinguished from that of the early Jacobean and later Caroline divines. His was a system to which the epithets "violent," "hard," "controversial," and "ceremony-loving," have been, and may be, applied. It was con-

spicuous for its petty innovations, its exclusive clericalism, and its unconstitutional methods of action. The people were treated by bishops and archdeacons like naughty boys by a schoolmaster. Clarendon himself, a reluctant witness, uses language of this sort. Under the circumstances this School had a vast effect in forming and perpetuating schism. The subsequent generations of exasperated Dissenters were the natural progeny of a system in which the people were held down by the hand of power while ecclesiastical tyranny worked its will. This was not the Establishment of Elizabeth, to which they had, more or less willingly, conformed.

The king's loss of the north was for a time retrieved by his gains in the west. While Essex and Waller were advancing upon Oxford, he cleverly marched to Worcester, and drew Essex to Devon, where that general hoped to cut off the king's supplies. Meanwhile Waller, attempting to harass the Royalists on the march, was out-generalled by the king, and defeated at Cropredy Bridge upon the Cherwell. The Royalists, however, soon suffered a terrible reverse, their first great defeat, at Marston Moor, near York, on July 2. Prince Rupert, destined to be his uncle's evil genius in war as the queen had been in peace, had the victory in his hands, but lost it by his folly. Perhaps even that might not have been fatal, had not Cromwell's Ironsides now appeared on the scene, under the command of one who never made a mistake in war. The Cavaliers were doomed.

Light flashed yet for a moment in quarters where Rupert was not concerned. Montrose in Scotland balanced the loss of northern England; and Essex's army was dispersed in Cornwall. The Parliament, no way daunted, instantly supplied fresh troops to Essex and Waller, who once more marched on Oxford. The king manœuvred with some skill, and forced them to battle at Newbury, where a second drawn battle took place, but, unlike the first, issued in his favour; for Lord Manchester, the parliamentary general, kept back his troops from decisive action, and lost his position with Parliament in consequence. This it was which gave Cromwell supreme command. He and the "Sectaries," or "Independents," alone knew what they were about. The Presbyterians, as they proved some years later, were reluctant

rebels; but the new force represented the military Revolution, and would stop for nothing. It was a crisis. The king might yet recover all. So the "New Model" was formed under Cromwell's auspices, who, when the "Self-denying Ordinance" of April 1645 had got rid of the half- 1645.
hearted, was placed at the head of affairs, though nominally under the Presbyterian Fairfax. Few cleverer things, from a military point of view, have ever been done. From that moment the struggle was really concluded.

In 1645 Charles had one more chance of a peace, but, buoyed up by Montrose's transient success, threw it away in the Uxbridge negotiations. He was still master of western England and Wales, but failed to understand that his army was demoralised, his resources exhausted, and his enemy practically invincible. In May he sallied forth from Oxford, relieved Chester, and took Leicester; but Fairfax and Cromwell caught him at Naseby, and once more the cool courage and generalship of the latter destroyed the force of the furious Rupert, and won the day. The Royalists of the west were now skilfully cut off by a chain of posts from Bridgwater to Lyme Regis, and Charles fled to Wales, from whence he escaped to Oxford on August 28, still hoping something from Bristol, where Rupert was in command. This last post the prince weakly surrendered on September 10, for which the king justly banished him; the gallant Montrose was defeated at Philiphaugh; no Royalist army remained; and Charles, on May 5, 1646, gave himself up to the Scottish 1646.
army. Chester, Worcester, and, last of all, Raglan and Pendennis Castles, surrendered in the summer.

Negotiations went on, but Charles's duplicity rendered them abortive. The Scots, not without some dishonour, gave the king over to the Parliament on January 30, 1647, and his 1647.
fate was sealed. The mastery of the Independents over the Presbyterians was signalised by the seizure of the king at Holmby, but Charles finds a new weapon in opening negotiations with both sides at once, which issues in his imprisonment by the army at Hampton Court. Thence he escaped on November 12, and made a final blunder in supposing that Colonel Hammond would betray his trust. On the contrary, he was immediately seized, and imprisoned in Carisbrooke Castle.

1648. The year 1648 opens with what is sometimes dignified by the name of the "Second Civil War," brought on by the rising of the king's more desperate adherents when they heard of his imprisonment; but it was a feeble and disunited movement of brave men, many of whom had been in arms against the king. The first war had lasted about four years, this scarcely four months. The fleet indeed went over to the king, but could effect nothing. Fairfax defeated the Kentishmen at Maidstone; Colonel Poyer was crushed at Pembroke; the Earl of Holland at Kingston; Langdale and Hamilton, at the head of a Scottish force, at Preston, by Cromwell himself and Lambert; and, lastly, Fairfax took Colchester.

Then came the deathly stillness of expectation, for every one knew that the end was near. The Presbyterians, aware of their weakness, now made a last effort to save the king's life by negotiation, and Charles even went so far at Newport as to concede an Episcopacy upon what was called "Usher's Model," but he stood to the last against its abolition. The fear lest the "man of blood," as the "Levellers" called Charles, should escape them now drove them into mutinous courses, which forced Cromwell to march upon London, and to put down the Parliament, which was still seeking for some compromise, by violence. "Pride's Purge" cleared the House, leaving only a remnant, which came to be called "The Rump," and the king, who had already been removed to the grim security of Hurst Castle, was brought up to Whitehall
1649. for his trial on December 13, 1648. On January 30, 1649 took place, amidst the groans and sighs of nearly every one except the army, the most celebrated execution which the world had ever yet seen. A mock trial, a pretended Court of Justice, a single strong man at the head of a fierce and triumphant soldiery, which was resolved to achieve liberty for the Independents:—this on the one side; and on the other, the main body of the nation, Churchmen and Presbyterians, powerless to preserve their erring sovereign, whose magnificent behaviour in adversity lent pity to the aid of long-suspended loyalty, and covered a multitude of constitutional crimes. But revolutions cannot be stopped at any given stage. It is easy, in cool blood, to say that the proper course would have been to have deposed and

banished the incorrigible king, and placed his son upon the throne under conditions. As it was, simple force prevailed, and the country had to accept a Commonwealth and Oliver Cromwell.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE COMMONWEALTH; OR THE GOVERNMENT OF OLIVER CROMWELL.

Two acts in the Cromwellian drama had been played out. He had in 1644 made himself the one necessary weapon for striking down royalty; the execution of the king in 1649 practically raised him to the highest place in the vacancy. It remains for us to watch the steps by which kingship, under the ancient title of a "Protectorate," came to sustain his usurpation.

The Rump Parliament cleared the ground by at once abolishing the office of king and the institution of the House of Lords. This revolution was embodied in the famous "Engagement," by which England was declared a Commonwealth, with Parliament at its head. A larger "Council of State" than before formed the executive, which administered the Government by five Committees, for the army, navy, Ireland, foreign affairs, and law. Of these Cromwell was of course the leading spirit. As he could trust no one else, he himself undertook to reduce Ireland to order. This, and the Scottish campaign which soon followed, kept him visibly in the first place till matters were quite ripe. Both countries had risen for Charles II. in formidable strength; but the terrible examples of Drogheda and Wexford, where the invincible troops of Cromwell gave no quarter, and slew the garrisons in cold blood, soon put down the Irish resistance. The "General" then left the work to be completed by his relatives, first Ireton, and then Henry Cromwell. Under the last, Ireland was subjected to the pitiless "Cromwellian Settlement," the basis of the present Irish land-tenure.

In May 1650 Cromwell found it was high time to deal with 1650.

Scotland. Montrose's gallant rising had been crushed, and himself hung, just before Charles II. landed, when the country at once declared for the young king. The English victory of Dunbar, however, proved how helpless even an experienced general like Leslie was in the presence of a born master in the art of war. Nevertheless, Charles, safe in the Highlands,
1651. was crowned at Scone, and immediately executed a rapid march into England by passing Cromwell's flank, a bold but ill-judged stroke in the presence of such a general. Flying after the king as an eagle might chase a hawk, Cromwell crushed him at Worcester with little loss, in the "crowning" victory of September 3. Though the Parliament had declared itself supreme, these brilliant victories enabled Cromwell to act as such in his own person; and being assigned the Royal Palace at Hampton Court, he prepared the army, through a "Council of Officers" sitting at Wallingford House, to put down the last vestige of the old Parliament. Meanwhile Monk held Scotland in subjection with great skill, and in perfect loyalty to the Government. It was not till after Cromwell's death that he found the country was really insisting on the Restoration of the royal family, which he then accomplished. The country settled down tranquilly under the supremely able military rule of Oliver, which had become even welcome after so many years of trouble.

It was time to turn men's thoughts to something else. An amnesty was proclaimed in 1652, and old scores might now, it was thought, be paid off against the Dutch. The alliance with that brave people, sorely tried indeed by the massacre of Amboyna in James's reign, had lasted seventy-three years. The commercial interests, however, of the two nations, sprung from the same stock and devoted to the same pursuits, were too much opposed to allow in those times of a peaceable development. The Empire of the Seas was at stake. Europe was to witness three wars in succession, one under Cromwell and two under Charles II., before a desperate struggle of twenty years settled the question between the claimants.

The Portuguese, who, in right of discovery and enterprise, had taken the lead of Europe in the quest of oriental wealth, had been crippled by Philip II.'s acquisition of their country, and found themselves overmatched by the abounding energy of the Dutch, when once they had been set free from the

Spanish yoke. As the Dutch had broken in upon the exclusive system of the Portuguese, so they naturally determined to protect themselves against the efforts of the English to obtain a share of the commerce which political events had hindered them from acquiring for themselves. The English were not, however, to be kept out, and in 1651 passed the first Navigation Act, which had the immediate effect of annihilating the Dutch carrying-trade to the ports of England, and of arousing the nautical spirit of both populations. The Dutch, jealous of the new Republic, had shown their partiality for the Royalists, and the Council determined to bring matters to a point.

During the troubles the Dutch had learnt to believe that the English would no longer care to insist on their ancient claim to the Sovereignty of the Narrow Seas, and they had come to use the fishing-grounds on the coast of Scotland as if they were their own, no longer even pretending to pay the tenth fish which was due to the English. The first of these rights had been jealously guarded even by James and Charles, guarded for many centuries with the utmost care, not as a mere ceremony of respect to the English flag, but as a protection to the English coast and commerce. This touched the proud spirit of the Dutch. The second vitally touched their bodies; for their teeming population was even more amphibious than the English, and lived even more on fish. What the herring-fishery was to England the history of the Cinque Ports and of Yarmouth bears witness. It is now that we first hear of the Right of Search, founded upon the Sovereignty of the Seas, of which so much more was to be heard in later times. The Dutch complained, the Parliament insisted. The former now fitted out a great fleet, which raised natural suspicions; the latter enforced from a Dutch squadron the proper salute to their flag. Thus, when Van Tromp anchored in the Downs with his fleet, Blake, who 1652.
had for some time been turned from a good soldier into an excellent sailor, being with his fleet off Dover, warned him off, and a battle took place. This was the first of seven, all fought within the space of fourteen months, and forming, one might say, almost one continuous and murderous conflict.

There were two circumstances which rendered the duel desperate and decisive. These were the only two nations in

the world which were thoroughly at home on the sea. Each had a large body of experienced seamen from which to draw their crews; each a well-formed public opinion, independent of ministerial caprice, as to nautical merit. Again, each had been trained in war, though the English most recently—war of a kind which brought home to men the higher side of what, if not patriotic, is debasing. The English had the advantage of knowing where to put their hands on military commanders who were clever enough to adapt themselves to the sea in middle life, and who brought with them a tried courage, coolness, and ability of the very highest order. Blake and Monk stand at the head of these men. Doubtless Cromwell himself would have made a third with them had he been tried; but there were many others who were only second in merit. Van Tromp and De Ruyter were fine officers, but they had no supply of men like these to support them in the noble struggle which they made, though doomed to fail.

1652. The issue of the first battle, on May 19, was in Blake's favour, but Tromp had not received full instructions, war not being yet proclaimed. In the subsequent proceedings the Dutch admiral was unfortunate, and was superseded by De Ruyter, who, taking advantage of Blake's absence in the north to put down the unlicensed fishing-fleet of the Dutch, attacked Ayscue off Plymouth on August 16. This was a drawn battle. In the third, fought again in Dover Straits, Blake and Penn were completely victorious over De Ruyter and De Wit, but no great losses had yet taken place on either side. The English ships were larger than the Dutch, and Blake was gradually teaching his officers their duty. In the fourth battle he underrated his enemy, and, though surprised by Tromp off Dover with double his own force, resolved on attacking him. After performing splendid services in his own ship, the Triumph, Blake found his fleet hopelessly outnumbered, and had to take shelter in the Thames; upon which Tromp hoisted the famous broom at his masthead, and swept the Channel. His triumph was short. Parliament sent Blake out again almost immediately with refitted ships, and gave him worthy coadjutors in Monk and Deane. They stretched across the Channel to intercept Tromp, who was returning to Holland with a vast convoy of prizes. This was the first great fight: both sides were equal, and it lasted

three days, each day disastrously to the Dutch, who got off in the night at last to their own coast. Blake was severely wounded, and there was great loss of men on both sides. The victory was gained on February 18, 1653.

In some of its circumstances this battle, named from Portland, was not unlike the running fight with the Spanish Armada, but the defence of Tromp was of a very different kind. The next two battles, however, ruined the enemy. Monk, Deane, and Lawson, with nearly a hundred ships, met, on June 2, the same number of Dutch ships off the North Foreland, under the command of Tromp, De Ruyter, and De Witt, and were having very much the best of it, when Blake's squadron joined, and enabled the English on the second day to gain a decided victory with little loss. Here Deane was killed. The enemy were now blockaded in their ports. The final and most desperate battle was fought by Monk, Penn, and Lawson against Tromp and De Witt, on July 31, off the Texel. Monk ordered no quarter to be given, and the loss of the Dutch, though not very great, was so large that they sued for peace. Tromp was killed, and his country reserved itself for a future day. The Dutch obtained in the end far better terms than might have been expected, owing to Cromwell's change of position. Besides a large indemnity, they submitted on the question of the flag, and agreed to exclude the House of Stuart from Holland.

This last article had assumed a new importance. Before the last two battles had been fought Cromwell had put an end to the Rump Parliament (on April 20, 1653) by what has been called, to distinguish it from "Pride's Purge," Cromwell's Purge. Each was a step towards the unlimited power at which he was aiming. He required recognition as supreme ruler, and a Parliament of his own making. To this end he put himself at the head of a new Council of State, which summoned the "Little" or "Barebones" Parliament. This, however, soon expired, partly of ridicule, partly of its own rash schemes and bitter dissensions. Before the end of the year it resigned into Cromwell's hands, while he accepted from a few of his partisans the title of "Lord Protector." Perhaps under the circumstances nothing else was possible; Hallam styles it a "justifiable usurpation."

He now drew up his "Instrument of Government," which included in its provisions Triennial Parliaments of 460 members, freely elected from each of the three kingdoms, and a Council of 21, under himself. Scotland was incorporated with England.

1654. No sooner, however, had the new Parliament met, in the autumn of 1654, than it appeared that it would not accept the Protector's dictates without debate. It was therefore almost immediately dissolved. Again therefore he governed without Parliament, as he had already done for several

1655. months previously; and in 1655, he determined to divide the country under major-generals, one in each of eleven districts. Thus England falls under a "state of siege." Conspiracies are frequent: the press gagged. On the other hand, Blake added to the renown of England in the Mediterranean. The Barbary pirates were suppressed, and the Italian States taught to respect the flag; Penn and Venables had conquered the island of Jamaica, the accidental but most solid acquisition of the period.

1656. In 1656 the Protector made a third parliamentary experiment by excluding ninety of his opponents from the list of the elected; and this expurgated body presented, *under his own guidance*, a "Humble Petition and Advice" that he would now take on himself "a higher title," name a successor, and establish two Houses of Parliament. He was not wanting in more independent advisers of this step, such as the King of Sweden. Here, however, his officers interpose. They will have no kingship; and Cromwell, being wholly dependent on the army which had placed him in power, is forced to bend to their will. He adopts the rest of the "Advice," and is installed with great pomp as Lord Protector in Edward the Confessor's chair. Loyalty, he professed to believe, would grow up around the new title as well as the old. Of course it did not, and could not. With the Church of England proscribed, the Presbyterians vanquished, and the Royal Family ready to take advantage of the first opportunity, his tenure could not but be precarious. Lambert, the most brilliant of the generals, now refuses to take the oath, and the allegiance of the army is more and more undermined. These fierce fanatics and ambitious soldiers had not shed their blood to place another

king on the throne, nor did the new Body-Guards make much impression on them.

Cromwell's various attempts to thrust a new Constitution on the country concluded with one more failure. His new House of Lords was too contemptible to be acknowledged by his House of Commons, and both were dismissed in 1658. It was ominous that Ormond was in London at this very time, guiding the conspiracies which were rapidly wearing out the Protector. On September 3 of that year he dies. 1658.
His last years had been gilded by Blake's splendid feat of arms at Teneriffe, and by the acquisition of Dunkirk by means of an English force acting in concert with the French. His policy at this date of supporting a threatening France against a moribund Spain has been very generally condemned; but it dazzled the people, who had nothing else to attract them in a rule of which they were thoroughly tired.

We have of late years learnt to form a more just idea of this remarkable man by his own letters, but a violent reaction in his favour, fanned by the inflated rhetoric of Carlyle, seems now to be giving place in its turn to a more balanced estimate. We are in presence of an absolute fanatic in religion, who formed around him a little world of hypocrites, but was not a deliberate hypocrite himself; a forcible man, often unscrupulous as to means, but resolved before all things to preserve order in the State which he had been one chief agent in rescuing from tyranny. He was ambitious, no doubt, but to obtain supreme power was not in itself his aim. He felt that no one else but he, after Charles's execution, could realise the ideas of civil order and national independence; but in his schemes for pursuing these objects he showed himself a mere inconsistent theorist. Perhaps the best excuse for his failure is that the very condition precedent of his government, his entire dependence on the army, made success impossible. The English had inherited a grand constitutional system which made them despise Cromwellianism. It could not have lasted.

If we inquire of our older guides, we find that Ranke "cannot award him the praise of perfect sincerity"; and calls his conduct in Ireland "deliberate violence and cold-blooded calculation." Hallam says that, like Napoleon, he was "devoid of honour, conscience, and humanity." But he

was surely far superior to Napoleon; and we must never forget the simple religious life which he led in the midst of his family, a life which we cannot but contrast with the evil principles and practices prevalent in high places both in England and abroad. The condition of affairs in Church and State in which he found himself when he arrived at manhood has much to answer for.

With all his faults no country but England could have produced such a man. He had his place in the unfolding of her destiny, the place of a beacon amidst the shoals of politics. There should never again be a military government; the sovereign should never again act unconstitutionally, so as to let it in. The old Church should never again give place to fanatics.

The vow was registered, and it has been kept.

CHAPTER XXIII.

CHARLES II. [1649–1685] (1660–1685)—PART I.

WHILE the reigns of the first two Stuarts and the Commonwealth are comparatively simple and intelligible, that of Charles II., like that of Elizabeth — yet for what different reasons!—is complicated and difficult. Let us call the main divisions of the reign by the names of Clarendon, The Cabal, Danby, The Plots, and The Tyranny.

We need hardly follow the course of the few months during which Richard Cromwell occupied his feeble Protectorship, or of the general anarchy which placed the simple question before the country,—"Shall we prolong a military despotism, or restore the king?" There was no real doubt about its desire; but if Monk had not been what he was, a cool, prudent, brave man, and, at the same time, a consummate dissembler, the Restoration could only have taken place, if at all, after a long and sanguinary struggle. It was now that the value of parliamentary representation showed itself. Summoned under the auspices of Lambert,

the next best of the generals after Cromwell, he and his brother officers dealt with the independent spirit which the Parliament at once evinced, in Cromwell's fashion, by a summary expulsion. This put an end to the national hesitation, and fixed all eyes upon Monk,—all the more since Booth's premature rising was easily put down by Lambert. Monk, weeding out his army, and deliberately allowing the anarchy to become palpable, at last marches on London, arriving on February 3, 1660. Perfectly understanding the state of affairs, and easily disposing of Lambert, he summons the Convention Parliament in April, and that body receives with joy a message from Charles. The king is proclaimed peaceably under Monk's consummate management, and arriving in London on May 29, receives the ecstatic welcome of the whole people, pretending, in his witty way, to wonder why he had not come to receive it sooner.

Charles began his reign by adopting the system which has prevailed ever since, that of a Cabinet within the Council. At such a time the opinions of the larger body differed too much for united co-operation. He selected Clarendon, Monk, Lords Southampton and Ormond, his own secretary Nicholas, and Monk's secretary Morris ;—the first, of course, being all-powerful in the rearrangement of affairs necessary after the Rebellion. Clarendon has received scant justice in recent literature. After such a convulsion, with such a multitude of conflicting claims, a dishonourable king, and Royalists too furious to dream of fair play, who could avoid mistakes? They were nothing compared to his merits. We must distinguish the comprehensive results which were attained by his means from the accidental circumstances which have coloured modern criticism, such as his French policy, which arose out of his long residence in exile, and his absurd excuses for his daughter's marriage to the Duke of York.

It is Clarendon's praise that he swerved neither to the right nor left in the re-establishment of Church and State upon their ancient basis. In this he followed the precedent of Queen Elizabeth. What had been destroyed by violence must be replaced where it was before. Nothing else could have stood. And it has stood, with just such modifications as time has necessitated. The danger of the restored parlia

mentary system was, lest it should be again treated as it had been before the Rebellion. His remedy was, that it should be protected from all direct interference on the part of the sovereign. Its summons might even yet, as often happened, be iniquitously and unconstitutionally withheld, but it was to be free while in session. This sacredness of Parliament carried with it the future. Till this was done party government was impossible, for parties could never form. Proscription and civil war were no longer to be the only alternative.

Thus, though abuses might, and did still, prevail, it was Clarendon who made our modern system of Constitutional Government possible, with the momentous result that through England it has extended to nearly all the world. Beyond this maxim, he would leave the relations between king and Parliament to work themselves out. To blame him for not at this juncture establishing a Parliamentary Appropriation of Supplies is to ignore the volcanic state of the country and the threatening condition of the still powerful Cromwellian soldiery, fiercely brooding over their sudden fall from absolute power. The old prerogative must, in his conception, coexist with absolutely free Parliaments. It was the restored Stuarts themselves who, before long, made the constitutional place thus assigned to them untenable. By that time the forces of British society had assumed sufficient coherence to limit the power of the Crown within safe dimensions.

But perhaps Clarendon has been still more bitterly attacked for his ecclesiastical settlement, and still less allowance has been made for the fact that he had to guard against his own king and the courtiers quite as much as against those who had lately levelled the Church to the dust. He was himself responsible for both the Declaration of Breda and the subsequent Declaration of October 15, 1660. It was not his fault that they were not honourably carried into effect. The intensely narrow Churchmanship of Parliament blocked the more statesmanlike policy which he approved. It would appear that he would not only have made certain rites and ceremonies optional, but that he approved of some approach towards Ussher's Model of the Episcopate. He also desired to mitigate the harshness of the final proceedings which issued in the expulsion of ministers on St Bartholomew's Day.

The Corporation Act, the Conventicle Act, and the Five Mile Act were the consequence partly of Charles's policy of "Indulgence" which his Romanist friends pressed on him, and which under such auspices the country would not hear of, and partly of the increasing violence of the dissenting enemies of the Church. All these were erected as barriers for its protection, a policy which might be condemned from an independent point of view, but which appeared absolutely necessary to those in power. We must regard the dominant party of the Restoration as prisoners set free, incapable of pursuing the more temperate policy. We have already made that excuse for the excesses of the Great Rebellion. But if we look at Clarendon's course in having the Prayer-book, which he himself wished to remain unaltered, scrupulously passed through every constitutional stage in Convocation and Parliament, so that the Act of Uniformity might be beyond cavil,—if we look at his course in abolishing the separate power of self taxation hitherto enjoyed by the clergy, and welding together the whole nation on one territorial basis of freehold and copyhold tenure, we shall see that he exercised what Ranke calls his "colossal power" in a patriotic, far-seeing way, and that he must not be robbed of the credit of it.

Of course, so grand a position as mediator between violent parties exposed this great man to attacks on all sides. Above all, he was very much in the way of a licentious king and court. But his banishment gave us his immortal works, and his death in exile, after such services as he had rendered his country, exhibits one more martyrdom for political virtue. Ranke has justly remarked, "He essentially fixed the circle of ideas for the English nation." Of how few others can this be said. Several misfortunes of this period turned the joy of the Restoration into what seemed very like a punishment for its extravagance. The Plague, the Fire of London, the queen's childlessness, the sale of Dunkirk, and the disgraceful issue of the first of Charles's Dutch wars, were all charged upon the devoted head of Clarendon, whose wealth excited envy and suspicion, and who had by this time lost all his friends by death.

The Dutch War requires only a few words, since the nature of the conflict has already been discussed. En-

couraged by the French, and anxious to revenge their former defeats, the Dutch brought this war on themselves by their treatment of English ships; but perhaps the offence was mutual. Both sides rushed at one another with ferocity at Solebay (or Southwold Bay), on June 3, 1665, the English under James, Duke of York, supported by Prince Rupert and Montagu, Earl of Sandwich, with more than a hundred ships; the Dutch with about the same number, under Opdam and Tromp, son of the great admiral. James, the only Royal Prince of England who can be compared with Richard I. and Edward III. for naval glory, not only gained a fine victory on this occasion, but deserved to do so by being the first officer to order and practise the system of fighting in line. Trained in France under Turenne, he saw that fleets of such magnitude could not be kept in hand without some arrangement such as he had been accustomed to see on shore. Henceforth the system was adopted in all fleets, but became, after a century's experience, too rigid for the later sort of armaments. Yet to "break the line," as Rodney taught navies to do in 1782, was, after all, only an adaptation of James's tactics.

These were the finest fleets ever yet assembled; noblemen on both sides flocked on board to battle, and some were killed. Opdam was blown up in his flagship. The loss of the Dutch was great, and the victory of the English complete. Disputes arose as to the cause of the victory not having been properly followed up, and these prevented the further employment of James, who was probably not in fault; but he and his brother never ceased to interest themselves in the affairs of the Royal Navy. It was by far the best service they performed. The French, fearing the further success of England, now joined the Dutch, and declared war against their ancient rival. Monk, who had become Duke of Albemarle, was associated with Prince Rupert, but was caught, as Blake had been in the former war, by De Ruyter and Tromp at the head of a largely superior force on June 1, 1666; yet, like Blake, he attacked the enemy. A running fight continued for two days, when Rupert joined; but t ugh the hostile fleets did not separate till June 4, neither side could claim the victory. The losses were immense. It was on this occasion that De Witt re

marked that "Englishmen might be killed, and English ships burnt, but the English courage was invincible." Shortly afterwards, however, on July 25, the English under Monk and Rupert gained the most complete victory of the whole war, off the North Foreland, over De Ruyter and Tromp, and with little loss; and this was followed by a great destruction of the Dutch commerce.

Both sides now began to see that the French, whose promised aid to their allies came to nothing, were rejoicing in the spectacle of the two peoples destroying one another, and they agreed to negotiate. While the terms were under discussion at Breda, the Dutch fleet under De Ruyter took advantage of the absence of English ships, and for a few days held possession of the mouth of the Thames. The conduct of Charles in applying the supplies voted by Parliament for the war to his own nefarious pleasures was the cause of this disgrace; but the treacherous proceedings of the Dutch in the management of the expedition brought them no credit, nor did they effect anything of consequence. Monk once more came to the front, and stopped their progress. It was his last service. Fear of the French still, however, prevailed on both sides, and peace was made in 1667. Then came Clarendon's disgrace; soon after which Monk died, and the king, relieved from the only people he feared, placed himself in the hands of "The Cabal." Monk is one of the great men of English history, made for a crisis, head and shoulders above his fellows; perhaps Blake's equal as a naval officer, and, as the agent of the Restoration, second to none. One of his greatest merits was that he knew how to keep his secrets from clever tattlers like the amusing Pepys, who naturally disparages him, and votes him "dull."

The great event of the second period, 1668–1673, is the Triple Alliance of 1668, which was not due to the Cabal, but entirely to the influence of Sir William Temple, the first of many attempts to bridle Louis XIV., now in his full career of aggrandisement. What can be a stronger testimony to the European importance of Holland than that, in the very midst of these internecine conflicts, her alliance was found necessary, along with that of Sweden, against the disturber of the public peace? And yet the English king of the people's choice was almost immediately afterwards making his first Secret Treaty 1668–1673.

with Louis, by which Charles was bribed to keep England quiet while Louis was to conquer his neighbours, and crush the Protestantism of which England was the acknowledged head. The two Papist members of the Cabal were alone privy to this High Treason against the nation.

Soon afterwards the king struck an equally foul stroke of a different kind. The goldsmiths were a sort of Bank of England. People deposited money with them and received interest; Charles robbed them of the loan or trust-money which fell due to be paid back that year, and passed over the interest alone to the lenders. This was a national bankruptcy. The stolen property was soon spent, and the next resource was the seizure of the Dutch Smyrna fleet, without any Declaration of War. It was accompanied by the Declaration of Indulgence, which the Cabal thought might now be safely launched. They were mistaken. Parliament, suspecting the king's Secret Treaty, flamed up against the French and Papal policy of the Cabal, forced the Government to withdraw the Indulgence, and to pass the famous Test Act, which was never repealed till recent times. It greatly strengthened the position of Parliament against king and ministers. The king was now forced to make peace a second time with the Dutch; for with these gallant enemies a third war had broken out, which may be described in a few words.

Louis, not content with neutrality, persuaded Charles to
1672. join him in the attempt to subjugate and divide the territory of the Dutch. His fleet indeed assisted the English about as little as it had previously assisted the Dutch, but his troops invaded Holland in force. The fury of the Dutch people now broke out in the murder of the De Witts, to whose crooked policy these disasters had been chiefly due, and they rallied with their accustomed spirit round the young Prince of Orange, destined to be King of England. Under him the country was flooded; and after the grand and successful defence which thus became possible, the French were forced to withdraw. Meanwhile the Duke of York and Montagu, Earl of Sandwich, fought, again at Solebay, a furious battle with the Dutch fleet under De Ruyter, and put it to flight; but with the loss of the brave earl himself,—a man of fine character, who left an inheritance of courage and conduct of the highest kind to the Royal Navy, in this noble period of

its history. In the summer of 1673, the Duke of York having been driven from office by the Test Act, Prince Rupert became the chief of the English admirals, seconded by the gallant Spragg and Lord Ossory. The first of the three battles which concluded the war was fought on the Dutch coast, and was one of the same stubborn sort as before, the French giving little aid. De Ruyter and Tromp again bravely commanded the Dutch. It is usually reckoned a drawn battle. In the second, fought on the same coast a week later the result was much the same, but without so heavy a loss on either side. The English fleet had not been refitted and remanned, as it should have been; for Rupert, with his old fiery spirit, would not listen to the experienced officers of the fleet. The third was again fought on the same coast on August 11, and the French, having secret orders not to fight, were worse than useless. The prince fought with his old courage, but the English force was inferior, and badly handled. Spragg was killed, and though the Dutch did not take any ships, the English were for the moment unable to keep the sea. It was now that Parliament effectually interfered.

Thus ended the Twenty Years' War, and without dishonour to the Dutch, though they had suffered by far the most. In the final Peace of 1674 they secured the old terms which the English pensioner of France had attempted to make more rigorous. They had only to yield the ancient honour to the British flag, and pay a large indemnity. When we remember that they were fighting the French by land at the same time, our admiration rises. It is agreeable to reflect that they were henceforward to be found by the side of England in the struggle which at last set bounds to the ambition of Louis. Great Britain was now supreme at sea, and in a position not only to absorb all colonial settlements which could only be retained by naval superiority, but to carry success in the longest wars against the greatest odds in all future combinations of the Great Powers.

Perhaps the victory of Parliament over the debauched and treacherous Charles was even of more importance than naval victories. The Test Act destroyed the whole of the Stuart schemes for uniting the Papists and the Anglicans against the Dissenters. The king was only dissuaded from dissolving Parliament by Arlington's convincing argument that he would

arouse the whole nation and go the way of his father. When James was told the same thing he showed how much less common-sense he possessed than his baser brother.

The Cabal was broken up in this session of Parliament,
1674. and the Danby period commenced in 1674. For some years Government was of a more respectable kind. Sir Thomas Osborne, known best as Earl of Danby, and finally as Duke of Leeds, represented Clarendon's policy, and formed the Tory party, while Shaftesbury, who headed the Opposition, organised the Whigs; but as yet these parties were only known as the Court Party and the Country Party respectively. Both were aristocratic parties, and remained so. It is now that the House of Commons, under the management of leaders in the House of Lords, became far more important than the Upper House, and that Danby established a system of bribing the members, to which they had already become more or less accustomed, and which naturally ended in demoralising himself still further. Thus it was that he ended by backing up the king's base intrigues with Louis. which he had for some years steadily resisted. Indeed it was to counteract his influence with the House, obtained by bribery, and used against France, that Louis, through his ambassador Barillon, secretly outbid him, and purchased in Parliament the acquiescence of England in his aggressive policy. Thus it was that this Parliament obtained the name of the "Pension Parliament"; but it sat for eighteen years, and was not dissolved till 1679, when the Plots occupied the entire attention of the nation, and all but produced a premature Revolution. They were succeeded by three years of Government without Parliaments, which may fairly be called a "Tyranny" of the same nature as that of Charles I., and may as well be taken along with the reign of James II. His still more barefaced attempt to coerce the nation brought on the last crisis of the sort to which England has been exposed.

CHAPTER XXIV.

CHARLES II. (PART II.) AND JAMES II.: 1685–1689.

THE Danby administration had been marked all through by violent debates concerning Lord Shaftesbury's Exclusion Bill. The dread of the Duke of York's accession to the throne was the motive power, but the hatred of what was called "Popery and wooden shoes" rallied round it all the discontented classes. Danby, and still more the king himself, were resolute to the last in opposition to the bill. The great body of the Royalist gentry and many of the clergy were on their side. The royal blood was in their view sacred; the Restoration should not be undone. It was this common bond between the royal family and himself which gradually ruined Danby's position, since Louis took care that the minister's connection with Charles's French intrigues should be known to his enemies.

It was in 1676 that Louis bought for £100,000 Charles's promise not to treat with any one of the Powers without his consent. This was the second Secret Treaty. It enabled France to make the Peace of Nimeguen in 1678, and under the paralysis of the Empire, Spain, and Holland, to dominate Europe. Thus he excused himself from relinquishing his hold on Alsace, Lorraine, and the Flemish barrier-towns, and seized under absurd pretexts Strasburg, Luxemburg, and other important places; while his able ministers, Colbert and Louvois in succession, formed a fine navy, and conquered the Spanish and Dutch fleets in the Mediterranean. Even Algernon Sidney was one of the pensioners of France who swelled the ignoble band of traitors to the still struggling liberties of Europe. The really important event of this period was the marriage of Mary, James's daughter by Anne Hyde, to William of Orange. It was Danby's doing, and was to have great issues. 1676.

In the last session of the Parliament which had impeached Danby the infamous "Popish Plot" of 1678 began the disgraceful series of convulsions which betrayed the dangerous state of the body politic. Through the confusion of Parliaments summoned and speedily dissolved, of plots, counter-

plots, and savage executions on either side, as each gained the upper hand, a few national events emerge. By the great
1679. Act of Habeas Corpus of 1679, due to Shaftesbury, the liberty of the subject received the chief security it had obtained since Magna Charta. Every prisoner must be tried at the next assizes, or else released on bail. The constitutional experiment also, known as Sir William Temple's Council, is notable as exhibiting the despair which was felt of obtaining a working government; but it broke down in a year. It was better that the old methods should be made workable, as they soon were by the constant friction of King, Lords, and Commons. From this turbulent period also dates the exclusion of Roman Catholic peers from the House of Lords; nor did they find their way back till 1829

Yet other party watchwords connect themselves with the Country Party and the Court Party. The Exclusion Bill, which was twice passed by the House of Commons, would have been forced on the king if he had not been enabled by French gold to dissolve Parliament on several occasions, and so dispense with supplies. Hence the name of "Petitioners" given to the supporters of the bill, and of "Abhorrers" given to the opposition,—thus making a transition stage to the permanent epithets of "Whig" and "Tory" which obtained in
1681. the next reign. The final struggle took place in 1681 at Oxford, which still recklessly adhered to its old traditions; and both sides, after the fashion of the Mad Parliament of 1258, attended Parliament in arms. The plot by which Shaftesbury and his friends were prepared to establish their party by force was here frustrated by the king's sudden dissolution of Parliament in 1681; and the country was saved from another civil war. It had only to wait a very few years before the royal pensioners of France were to disappear, and parties to be formed on an honourable basis.

It soon appeared indeed that the nation as a whole was so far from being prepared to take violent measures that it experienced a complete revulsion in favour of the king. The exposure of the plots and the danger Charles had incurred renewed the sentiments of the Restoration, and he was enabled without any serious opposition not only to take vengeance on his enemies, but to govern without Parliaments till he died. Shaftesbury fled, and died abroad; Rus-

sell and Sidney were executed; Essex only escaped by dying in prison. Jeffreys commenced his infamous career with these transactions. The charters of the obnoxious town corporations were seized, and by way of justifying the tyranny the University of Oxford published a decree in favour of the slavish doctrine of Passive Obedience. This revulsion was fatal to James; for on his peaceable and even popular succession, after Charles's sudden death in 1685, he rashly supposed the party of the Exclusion Bill to be politically dead, and accordingly rushed to ruin. He was soon to discover that the middle and lower classes of the realm were by no means so corrupt and irreligious as their representatives. The vices of the age had been to a great extent superficial. Loyalty to a family would not go beyond a certain point. It would not yield to corrupt faction; but when Church and Dissent combined to defend the Reformation, everything else had to give way, though the king might be leading the attack. 1685.

It may be a question whether Charles's fine tact and popular manners could have balanced much longer the want of every respectable quality; but James had neither tact nor popular manners. He was more honest than his brother in avowing his Romanism, and so far commands respect; but his morality was no higher though less barefaced, his political principles the same. Their negative services to the Constitution were, like those of the Cromwellians, great in the way of warning; but what can be said for their common share in raising Louis to supreme power, in return for so much pocket-money to be shamefully spent, — a tyrant whose overthrow cost England and the crushed Protestants of Europe twenty-five years of tremendous conflict, oceans of blood, and a complete waste of the revenues which should have aided the progress of civilisation? This it was which the nation was soon to understand, happily before it was too late.

JAMES II. (1685–1689.)

Given an uncompromising Romanist king of mature age, with a young wife no less sincere, a camarilla of eager Romanists headed by the Jesuit Father Petre, this king

having been for many years actively engaged in pushing his religion against the steady opposition of his people, a people sternly attached to the Reformation,—and we are starting with the infatuated James towards the Revolution as a foregone conclusion. It is itself the beginning of the Revolution. Unlike Charles, the new king had been trained in war by sea and land, and the idea of force, the passion for strong measures, had become a second nature. Add to this the possession of business habits and long experience in administration, and we have the qualifications of a capable tyrant, whose force would have to be met by force.

James's first Parliament was attended by no adverse omen. It gave him a liberal grant, and he was firmly fixed on his throne by the collapse of Argyle's Insurrection in Scotland and Monmouth's in Somerset. Yet by the end of the year the cruel measures which he and Jeffreys took to punish the offenders had opened the eyes of his subjects. At the same time Monmouth's execution removed the only serious obstacle from the path of William of Orange; and one who could only have been a popular favourite by contrast to those in power, vacated his place for another towards whom the country now began to look with hope and ardent desire. James, however, concluding that his course was now clear, was encouraged to make his first move against the Constitution by foreign events. It was in this fatal year that
1685. Louis revoked Henri IV.'s "Edict of Nantes," and threw upon English shores a multitude of Protestant refugees. The Palatinate also in this year fell to a Papist, and the Duke of Savoy recalled the Toleration which Cromwell had forced on his country in favour of the Vaudois. Here again Louis blundered. It was from the French refugees that the anti-French and anti-Roman impulse of England in no small measure proceeded, just as it was from the victims of Alva that the cry for vengeance had been propagated under Elizabeth.

Believing that the long-hoped-for time had come at last, James now quarrelled with his Parliament, at first so well disposed, on the point of his claim to keep Roman Catholic officers in the army in spite of the Test Act. Next year he openly claimed the power to dispense with the laws as he pleased,—the laws of Englishmen, who justly prided them-

selves on the possession of a noble and hard-won inheritance. This of course effectually prevented his subjects from putting up with him as king. He had set out with Halifax as chief minister. He now protests and is dismissed. Parliament is prorogued, but the king was determined to count no cost so long as he could carry his point. This mental blindness was wittily expressed in the saying that "Charles could see things if he would, James would see things if he could."

In 1686 the king having failed to force the Scots to give up the Test Act, and believing that the English Dissenters would support him in attacking the Church, began, by what he thought to be an indisputable exercise of the Royal Supremacy, to silence the pulpits. All preachers were to abstain from controversy. Sharp, a London clergyman, afterwards Archbishop of York, disobeys, and his bishop, Compton, declines to interfere. The judges were more complaisant or more timid. In a test case, that of Hales, they confirm the king's claim for a Dispensing Power, and this encourages him to go to extremities with the clergy. He revives the High Commission Court, by which Compton is, by way of example, suspended; and then proceeds to fill up the Privy Council with Roman Catholic peers, and even to admit Father Petre to it. Next he puts in practice his scheme, and places the army, which he assembled at Hounslow Heath, under Roman Catholic officers. He now encourages the formation of monastic bodies, and the open attendance of Papists at places of worship. Having taken these steps in advance, the king considered it time to make the Universities subserve his interests just as they had worked with former sovereigns. Why should they not turn round once more and give up the Reformation? He and his headlong advisers confused the conformity of these institutions to a national movement which had been in progress for centuries — a constitutional loyalty for Church and king, which had indeed been overstrained—with a base subservience to the Crown, as if they had simply bowed to a personal tyranny. We know how the king discovered his mistake, and how the resistance of Magdalen College, Oxford, gave the key-note to the country. 1686. 1687.

This open tyranny was followed by the dissolution of Parliament, the installation of the Papal Nuncio with great

public ceremony, and a Royal Progress for the purpose of courting the Dissenters. Shrewsbury, Lumley, and Admiral Herbert now resign office, and the king is left alone with Sunderland, who had become a Papist,—a proverbially base politician,—and with Father Petre. So far from taking
1688. warning by signs of danger, James in 1688 issued his final Declaration of Indulgence, to which all the rest had been leading up, dispensing with the Test Act and all laws against Recusants. This proclaimed the abolition of each and every Act of Parliament which stood between him and his designs.

Now it was that the Dissenters, very much to their honour, refused to abet the king at the expense of the Constitution, and so to see the Reformation undone, though they might themselves be for the moment benefited. The whole nation, with insignificant exceptions, made up its mind, and only waited for a signal. This was given by the trial and acquittal of the seven bishops (Lloyd, Ken, Trelawny, Lake, Turner, and White, led by Archbishop Sancroft), who petitioned to be excused from reading the Declaration in their dioceses. But the universal joy caused by their acquittal would still perhaps have been insufficient to produce instant action had not a son been born to James while the bishops were in prison. That this well-timed event was an imposture was almost the universal belief at the time; but that opinion was gradually reversed as the old and young Pretender in turn grew to manhood, and exhibited too many of the Stuart qualities to make their parentage doubtful. As it was, not a moment was lost in sending an invitation to William of Orange to beg him to come over and deliver the country. Admiral Herbert undertook the dangerous mission. The seven who sent it were the ex-Minister Danby, Bishop Compton, Devonshire, Shrewsbury, Lumley, Sidney, and Admiral Russell. Some of these had personal reasons for action. The Earl of Shrewsbury was happy in being more than once useful to his country at a supreme crisis. It was he whose prompt action on the death of Queen Anne broke up the Jacobite conspiracy.

We must now look across the Channel and follow the message which Herbert delivered to William. The critical condition of Europe just at this moment is not more

observable than the preparation of William's mind for the task he was to undertake. Everything seemed to converge towards a successful issue. The open and resolute attack made by Louis on the Huguenots by the revocation of Henry's Edict of Toleration, coinciding with his audacious movements against his neighbours already mentioned, had convinced Europe that there was no escape except by concerted war; and just as William the Silent had been regarded as the only possible Protestant leader against Spain, so his descendant was regarded as the predestined leader against France. William's courage and conduct had been fully proved, but he saw plainly that little would be effected unless England were once more to take her place in the van of the nations. His attitude had hitherto been loyal to his uncles. He had supported hereditary right, and discountenanced rebels; but when James besought him to state his approval of the Declaration of Indulgence he declined. His visit to England in 1678 had, no doubt, like the similar visit of William the Bastard to Edward the Confessor, prepared him for the summons which was sure to come. But what would this Dutch Protestant do as to the settlement of the great ecclesiastical questions which underlay the Stuart policy, and really governed the situation?

There is every reason to believe that he owed to Bishop Burnet the influences which enabled him to accept the position of the Church of England as laid down at the Reformation. Burnet, along with some obvious defects, possessed a patriotism and a sound knowledge of the British Constitution which made him an invaluable tutor to James's daughter; for this he had practically become, both personally, and through his 'History of the Reformation.' James drove him out of England for writing that book, and at William's court he found a welcome refuge. Hence William, with the help of his excellent wife, became acquainted with the history of the English episcopate, and was already prepossessed in its favour against the arguments of Penn, whom James sent over to persuade him to favour the Indulgence. The extremes had met in those two plotters,—the Romanist king and the Quaker founder of Pennsylvania. A difficulty yet stood in the way, and Burnet again served his country. There was great difference of opinion as to the position which William should

take up on James's deposition. As merely Regent, or Prince-Consort of his Queen, he would not accept the invitation; but Burnet was in a position to assure him that he should rule and his wife obey, and this led him to fall in cordially with an enterprise which he chiefly regarded from a European point of view—for he saw plainly that he could not succeed against France unless he was King of England in reality.

The solution of the question of form was due to Danby and the moderate Church of England men,—it was to be a joint sovereignty of king and queen; while most of the leaders of the movement desired to go no further than to make William Regent; and Mary's uncles, Clarendon and Rochester, even aimed at her being accepted as sole sovereign. The imminence of danger, however, overpowered these differences, and William, in return, undertook to confirm all the privileges of Parliament, and to leave the English Church as it had been placed at the Reformation. His new subjects, on their part, agreed to join the European combination against Louis XIV. How remarkable, also, it is that Louis, who in his plans for the war had instinctively felt that he must first crush Holland, and had massed his troops and ships accordingly, should just at this crisis have quarrelled with James, whose protection from William was of supreme importance to himself. Puffed up by the grandeur of his position, he had too ostentatiously treated James as a feeble vassal whom he was bound to assist. James's latent patriotism fired up, and he paid back the insult; upon which, with more pride than policy, Louis abruptly took his own course, and marched off to attack Germany on the Rhine. That was the signal for William's invasion of England. It was the one thing left to be desired by the English.

The narrative of the invasion has been splendidly told by Macaulay, and the constitutional struggle which ensued by Hallam. Even the most ardent admirer of the Revolution can hardly restrain a feeling of pity for the unhappy king whose own conduct had brought on his fall. How could he have expected that the concessions he made with almost comic haste, when he found the ground sinking under his feet, could avail? To his credit it must be said that he was no Henri Quatre to change his religion for a crown. The in

jured bishops whom he prayed to help him at the last moment performed their duty when they replied that he must return to legal government, summon a free Parliament, and return to the old faith, the faith of his martyred father. These things, or, at any rate, the last, were impossible, not only for him, but for his son and grandson. Rightly styled in official documents "Pretenders," this was the honourable stumbling-block which rendered their pretension to the Crown insufferable. The history of the Stuart dynasty, following upon that of Mary Tudor, had settled the question for ever. Here at last the Dissenters and the Church kept step to the same tune. They both considered the doctrine of Infallibility inconsistent with liberty of conscience; that sooner or later Popish kings must be called upon to discountenance and put down "heresy"; and that the only question would be, whether the Church or Dissent should be the first to suffer. Henceforward the policy of England remained steady on the three lines from which the Stuart dynasty had departed. It was to be parliamentary, anti-Roman, European.

Thus ended the struggle which had been continuous during the whole of this Second Part of English History. The grandeur of the position attained by Edward I. and Edward III. elevated the whole nation to a height from which it could not only engage in a conflict with the medieval ecclesiastics who had so long dominated it, but also gave that conflict a European character. The circumstances which led to the advent of Wiclif in the fourteenth century led also to the struggles between kings and Parliaments. In the convulsions of the fifteenth century the kings gained the upper hand, and the ecclesiastics, who seemed about to fall, kept their place by a close alliance with the Crown, which began to assume more or less of a despotic power. It was a hollow position. The Tudor sovereigns, on the other hand, went over to the people, and became their leaders through the changes of the social condition of the age. As such they took care that the feudal nobility, crushed in civil war, should never resume its old position, nor the ecclesiastics theirs. The spoliation of the overgrown Papal hierarchy, with its monastic defences, established the Via Media, and rendered the Church of England triumphant. But the forms of the suspended Constitution required to be turned into realities

for a people bursting out into life and energy. The Stuarts, in a certain sense, answered the call, but only by resistance and opposition to it. Their gross mismanagement of affairs forced the people, on their side, to assert their constitutional right of resistance. It took them nearly a century to achieve their object. By the Revolution they succeeded in restoring their ancient Constitution to a wholesome condition, with just such changes in the way of religious toleration as the age demanded. These changes could now be made safely and honourably.

BOOK III.

FROM THE REVOLUTION TO THE YEAR 1865 IN THE REIGN OF QUEEN VICTORIA.

CHAPTER I.

WILLIAM III. AND MARY.

WE have been called upon in modern times to worship "the pious and immortal memory" of the "Deliverer." It is as well to understand that these glowing epithets are to be taken in a purely political sense. From beginning to end of William's career in England we mark the absence of all that causes a sovereign to reign in the hearts of his subjects. His unique position, by birth, marriage, past history, and headship of the existing anti-French combinations, convinced the common-sense of the English that he was the one necessary man for their purpose. The Revolution was bloodless, because the people were almost unanimous in his favour as against James; because they were satisfied with respect to his intentions towards England; and because his capability of pursuing the national course, parliamentary, anti-Roman, and European, which had been interrupted by the ill-starred elder branch of the Stuarts, was sufficiently assured. It was but recently that London had blazed with bonfires on Queen Elizabeth's birthday. The glories of those days were now, it was hoped, to return.

What enthusiasm of a more personal kind there was, gathered round William's consort, not round the cold impassive statesman and general. It is not of much use to "make idols and to find them clay." We may as well spare ourselves the pangs of disenchantment.

Still further, neither party to the mutual compact had, or could very well have, counted the cost of being peaceably governed, and at the same time replaced in the old European position. William's task was one of the most difficult ever undertaken. In Holland circumstances had exalted him to a far more autocratic position than had ever been held by a Stadtholder. In England he found himself, under the reaction of the times, depressed below the position of any previous English sovereign. Voltaire called him the "Stadtholder of England and King of Holland." Over and over again he was on the point of leaving England to its fate. Its importance as the main pillar of the anti-French alliance alone withheld him at the last moment. The key to the position is to be found in the history of the "Grand Monarque."

When the intolerable tyranny of Charles V. and Philip II. over Protestant Europe had been resisted and punished by the Protestant States of Germany, Holland, and England, and the Continent, under the auspices of Sweden and France, resettled by the Peace of Westphalia in 1648, it was fondly supposed that such tyrannies were at an end. Who would have supposed that England would be the means of raising up one more tyrant, of precisely the same kind, to be the curse of the world? It was the abdication of the restored and France-pensioned Stuarts from the international place which they should have occupied, following as it did upon Cromwell's French alliance against Spain, which enabled Louis XIV. to copy the earlier examples. By the time William had mounted the British throne the French king had arrived at the height of his grandeur, and the League of Augsburg had only just been formed with some hope of at least checking his terrible career. That closed his first period.

Happily for Europe, his great ministers and marshals were by this time passing away, and Louis, falling under the spell of the bigoted Madame de Maintenon, was attempting to do

much of their work himself. Perhaps even Marlborough would otherwise have found more difficulty in at last forcing a peace. The second and third periods were covered by William's headship of the Allies--the second being taken to close with the Peace of Ryswick in 1697, which was the result almost as much of William's grand defeats as of his final victories; the third, with the accession of Queen Anne. That short pacific period, from 1697 to 1702, was almost entirely occupied with the Partition Treaties regarding the inheritance of the Spanish Empire, which, when the temptation became too great, Louis broke through like so much pack-thread. When the fourth period came to an end, when Louis was humbled at last to the dust by Marlborough and Eugene, and all the tinsel of his false grandeur swept away, he stood forth not only as the confessed disturber of the European peace for half a century, but as the pest of his own country, which never really recovered from the drain he had made on its resources. It was he whose pride and ambition used up all the old collected materials of centuries, and left France poor and bare.

1689–1697. 1697–1702. 1702–1715.

But if we are to form an adequate judgment of the task performed in the reign of William and Mary, and of Anne, we must recall what this reign of Louis, the longest on record, really looked like in its pomp and pride. His court was the most splendid ever known. Around him gathered the most brilliant galaxy of statesmen, soldiers, divines, and literary men the world has ever seen, the most artificial and cultivated society; the political organisation of the realm exhibited the most complete centralisation; and along with all this—an essential part of it—was proclaimed the most unblushing tyranny over neighbouring States, the most wholesale persecution of Protestants. The result of it all was that the reign of a Louis XV. became possible, the Revolution of 1789 inevitable, the ghastly waste of the Napoleonic Empire the equally inevitable sequel. We have to travel back to ancient Nineveh, Babylon, and Persia for similar despotism and ruinous waste.

We return to the hero whose one conception of his destiny was that he was born to be the second saviour of modern Europe, as his ancestor had been the first. Every step of the process by which his advent to the British throne was guarded

by the care of those who had been so cruelly deceived at the Restoration, requires to be carefully studied. Never was any political change more carefully or more ably thought out, debated, or effected. All that we need draw special attention to here is that great constitutional document, the Bill of Rights, which put an end to the evasions of law practised by the Stuarts, and by which all "Papists" were *ipso facto* disabled from wearing the crown; as also to the new Coronation Oath, by which the sovereign was for ever to bind himself to maintain the "Protestant reformed religion established by law" — or, in other words, the Reformed Church of England—and to protect the clergy and churches in their rights. These are still the fundamental conditions of the British government by King, Lords, and Commons.

But the doctrines of Divine Right and Passive Obedience even yet carried weight with a certain section of the clergy, represented by Sancroft and six other bishops, who refused to take the Oath of Allegiance to William and Mary. This was the Nonjuring Schism in which four hundred clergy and a handful of laymen were involved. It was fortunate that it was so small a body, for if it had attracted a more considerable following James must have returned, and the process of ejecting him could not have been accomplished without torrents of blood and the collapse of the country. Such conscientious men as Ken command respect, but the history of the past century might have taught them to distinguish between the aggressive section of the Roman Catholics led by the priests, to which James belonged, and the section which was prepared to live as peaceable English subjects. It was the impracticable spirit of the Nonjurors which was the main cause of the feeble state of the Church of England, and of religion generally, in the eighteenth century.

The armed contest which the good sense of the English prevented in England, could not be prevented from taking place in Ireland as soon as ever James, in concert with his French protectors, established himself there in 1689. The reconquest of the island took a little more than two years. The general rising of the Roman Catholic population in James's favour may be contrasted with their subsequent quiescence during the Jacobite Rebellions of 1715 and

1745; and the resistance at Derry and Enniskillen may be regarded as typical of the hold which the English had obtained upon the north. The Battle of the Boyne, on July 1, 1690, is of course the central act of the drama, and Ginkel's victory at Aughrim, on July 12, 1691, with the ensuing Treaty of Limerick, its conclusion. The misunderstandings which are so summarily disposed of under the epithet "the Broken Treaty," arose rather out of the action of the Lords Justices, seven years later, than from William himself, who was willing to put a liberal construction upon the Terms of Surrender. But it was the system of Penal Laws against the Roman Catholics of Ireland which then, and for the whole subsequent century, governed the condition of the island; and those laws were necessitated by the use made of Ireland as a fulcrum for assault upon England by the Roman Catholic Powers. Left to itself, Ireland might have subsided into a peaceable portion of the realm without Penal Laws. As it was, the position of the Jacobites could only be dealt with by a system of "Protestant Ascendancy"; nor was it until the great changes effected by the French revolutionary war had developed themselves that the system could be entirely abolished. Ireland was at least protected from foreigners by the "Protestant garrison" which had been planted by James I. and Cromwell; and capital was attracted from England, which gradually raised the social condition of the people. 1691.

William, like Cromwell, had to deal with hostile elements in Scotland as well as Ireland, but the death of Claverhouse in the arms of victory at Killiecrankie was as decisive as Cromwell's defeat of Leslie at Dunbar. The elder Stuarts had long lost their position; and William's sentiments were akin to those of Scotch Presbyterianism, which, under the Stuart persecutions, had rallied the patriotism of the whole nation round its flag. At the Union Anne had no choice but to establish it.

Side by side with these proceedings on shore had occurred the naval battles in which Louis defended his client. In no portion of the naval history of England has the baneful influence of political partisanship been more conspicuous. Herbert's indecisive battle in Bantry Bay, and subsequently at Beachy Head, would have incurred serious punishment in

settled times, and Russell had given cause for so much distrust that the result of the battle of La Hogue was a welcome sur-
1692. prise. The capture of the stranded French ships by the boats of the fleet was, however, a fine exploit. The Royal Navy was in a state of transition; nor did it rise to its full height again till the middle of the eighteenth century.

William's first task had been to settle himself in England, and at the same time to animate the continental alliance; his second to establish his Government in Ireland and Scotland; his third to lead the Allies in person against the French. What can be conceived more difficult than to combine these various operations while treason was surrounding him on every side? His first scheme of Government was the very tempting one of employing the best men of both parties,—Halifax, the "trimmer," the ablest of the Whigs, Danby, the experienced Tory leader, who had behaved with such courage at the Revolution, and Nottingham, the trusted head of the more vehement Churchmen. By the year 1693 William discovered that his primary object, the war, could not be worked out by a theoretical scheme, and he then threw himself on a Cabinet composed mainly of professed Whigs,—Somers, Halifax, Wharton, and Russell, who obtained the name of the "Junto." They were joined next year by Shrewsbury and by Montague, who was to be famous as the earliest of great English financiers; but Danby and Godolphin were still content to work with them. The first of these, who had recently become Marquis of Caermarthen, was now Duke of Leeds; but was soon afterwards obliged to retire owing to corrupt practices, the chief blot on his character. This strong Whig element in the Government had the effect of making many of the Tories Jacobites. Marlborough's dismissal in 1692 for treasonable correspondence with James, whom he had deserted and powerfully helped to overthrow, brought on the painful quarrel between Queen Mary and the Princess Anne, who would not come to court without her friend, Lady Marlborough; nor were they ever reconciled. One however of these treacherous statesmen, Lord Sunderland, the king found so useful that he constantly resorted to him for advice.

How are we to regard this low level of political honour, this chronic state of conspiracy against an invited benefactor?

Marlborough was no worse than his neighbours, or only a little worse. The desertion of James at the Revolution shocks our sentiment less when we remember that the only safety from his violent and cruel temper seemed to be to treat him like an enemy in war, an enemy to be deceived by stratagem till the moment of escape arrived. This at any rate was the way in which it was regarded by people otherwise honourable. The later conspiracies can only be accounted for, not defended. The hereditary loyalty to the elder House had only been overborne,—slowly and sadly,—by the conduct of Charles and James themselves. Very many, in fact the large majority, had never wished William to be king, but only Regent, and they fondly hoped the old deposed king might yet learn a lesson from the past, and return. They had wished England to take her part against Louis ; but when they had to pay the taxes their ardour cooled. Who could wonder at the favour William showed to his countrymen? Those at least he could trust. But the Dutch were scarcely less hateful than the French. James was harsh and cruel : William was repulsive. James and his brother had forfeited respect by their adulteries : William's conduct was still more painful, because his wife was deservedly a favourite, and the grants to his mistress were so enormous. The influence of the Nonjurors was considerable, and told bitterly against William. The very easiness of the transition from James to William had left all the more differences to be fought out between opposing parties ; and it has been truly said that William never understood that he was only elected as head of a Commonwealth, which these parties, and not the king, practically governed.

In short, it is improbable that William would have kept his throne if it had not been for the profound affection inspired by Mary. That was seen at her death in 1694, when plots and conspiracies broke out afresh, and only subsided when, in the next year, the tide of misfortune turned. Up to that time William had only fought disastrous battles against the French, and exposed his best troops in a manner which was considered reckless. But the losses he inflicted at Landen and Steinkirk were almost as great as if defeats had been victories, and the spectacle of his courage and perseverance was almost as spirit stirring. He was very English in never knowing when he was beaten. At last he was rewarded for 1694.

1695. all his troubles. The capture of Namur and of Marshal Boufflers, in the presence of a great army under Marshal Villeroi, was an unequalled exploit, and brought the French to terms. William was now able to take advantage of the glory he had acquired, and to make a Royal Progress in England after the manner of Henry V. and Elizabeth. The people felt they had at least a hero at their head, and when he seemed about to be struck down by assassins, formed an Association for his protection as in the days of the great queen. It was now also that the king and Marlborough once more drew together. It had become plain that no one else but the earl could head the allies, and the Princess Anne had become next heir to the throne.

The foregoing remarks have exposed the true causes of William's difficulties. The earlier portion of the reign may be summed up by describing the underlying grounds of the national satisfaction which helped him to surmount those difficulties. It was not only that he cordially accepted the old English policy at home and abroad; this was far from all. The wisdom of the statesmen whom he gathered around him set on a new and permanent foundation the three leading elements of the welfare of the nation, its military force, its finance, and the harmony of, or at least a *modus vivendi* amongst, its religious bodies. No subsequent legislation has been of anything like the same importance.

As to the first, it is enough to say that the Mutiny Act of 1689 placed the army under the Legislature, and withdrew it for ever from the independent authority of the Crown. As to the second, the genius of Montague deserves more recognition than it usually obtains amidst the stirring events of the reign. Under him the system of loans to Government from the new Bank of England commenced its beneficent career, and enabled Great Britain to use her credit against the French, who had nothing of the sort; while at the same time it added to the stability of the Constitution by enlisting new classes of society on the side of order, attracted the confidence of capitalists, and was borne with unexpected ease under the rapid growth of national prosperity. For the first time also since the days of Elizabeth the nation faced the difficulties of recoinage, an immense boon. On this point then also, that of finance, we find ourselves already in the

modern track. The Government, by relinquishing the Royal cognisance of trade and handing it over to a Board, opened up fresh employment for the money which was now set free for circulation, and the enfranchisement of the press produced a sense of liberty never before enjoyed. In short, the Revolution brought with it, as it was hoped it would bring, popular freedom.

Lastly, the Toleration Act of 1689 relieved all Dissenters (except those who denied the Trinity) from liability to the Penal Acts of Elizabeth's reign; but the attempt to comprehend the more moderate Dissenters within the Church once more fell through. The times were too critical; the Dissenters did not themselves enter into the project. They still preferred to leave the Test Act unrepealed: at least they made no effort to repeal it. They were suspicious. They were satisfied with liberty of worship, and content to remain without civil offices, — a conclusion much to be regretted. Again, it was quite against William's wish that any of the clergy should be driven into schism by the Oath of Allegiance, and that he should thus be obliged to appoint new bishops; but it was necessary for the country that these bishops should be Whigs, which at once set them against the mass of the clergy, who were Tories, and very many of them Jacobites, even though they took the new oaths.

This at once affected Convocation, which since the first years of the Restoration had been practically suppressed; and as the Upper and Lower Houses could not agree, Tillotson advised the king to continue the practice of his predecessors. Scandals could not be permitted at such a time. Thus Convocation was left unsummoned for ten years. But towards the end of the reign a most creditable change took place. The striking revival of religion which had exhibited itself in the foundation of the Societies for Promoting Christian Knowledge, for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, and for the Suppression of Vice, and the establishment of some five hundred "charity schools," produced also a loud demand for the revival of Convocation. It was permitted to sit in 1701, and sat regularly till 1717, when still more vehement struggles between the two Houses, in still more critical times, brought its sessions to an end. Nor was it again revived till 1852. 1717-1852.

CHAPTER II.

WILLIAM III. (PART II.) AND ANNE (1702–1714).

WE have forestalled a few of the events which really took place after Mary's death, in order that we may give its true character to the later part of William's reign, which is a simple introduction to that of Anne. What we have called the second period of Louis's career includes the reluctant negotiations for the Peace of Ryswick, into which he was forced in 1697; the third takes up the uneasy years in which the Allies were vainly attempting to prevent future war by binding him to respect the Balance of Power whenever the expected death of the King of Spain should occur. This could only end in the renewed war which William was about to wage when he died. Marlborough then took his place; the Whigs, as before, turned out to be the only political party which could be trusted to support him, and the Treaty of Utrecht, like that of Ryswick, marked one further stage in the decline of France from her temporary state of inflated and delusive power.

William's lifelong efforts to secure the freedom of Europe
1697. were rewarded at Ryswick with the acceptance of his position as King of England by Louis, and the relinquishment by France of the gains which had been made on her eastern frontier. It could not be more than a truce. The Partition Treaties require interpretation, since they are still attacked without a due consideration of their true import in relation to English interests. They are scornfully attacked because we have now, in the nineteenth century, learnt to disapprove of rounding off ruling monarchies without respect to the wishes of the people concerned; though after all, this is the vice more or less of all treaties. The defence of William with respect to these secret treaties lies not so much in the danger, great as it was, to Europe of French aggrandisement by the annexation of Spain, as in the consequent exclusion of England and the northern nations from the Mediterranean. Spain at that time carried Italy; the Levant trade would be ruined; and the maritime influence of the naval Powers would be crippled, perhaps destroyed, by the colonial pre-

ponderance of France. Who then were the heirs of this Charles II. of Spain, now dying childless, whose affairs were to be so arbitrarily dealt with? The next heirs were no doubt the French Bourbons, since the elder of the two sisters of Charles II. had married Louis XIV. The renunciation of the inheritance of the united crowns, which had been made on marriage, as well in this case as in that of the Emperor Leopold I. who had married the second sister, counted only so far as it affected the husbands. The French claim settled on Louis's grandson, Philip of Anjou, to whom it eventually came; the Imperial claim on Leopold's grandson, the son of the Electress of Bavaria; and failing him, on his second son, the Archduke Charles, by a second wife.

The first Partition Treaty was too decidedly against the 1699.
interests of France to be permanent. She was only to have South Italy and the province of Guipuscoa,—which did indeed give her the means of coercing Spain,—while Spain, the Netherlands, and the Indies were to go to the Electoral Prince of Bavaria, a youth who was naturally supposed to be less dangerous than the great kings; Lombardy was to go to the Archduke Charles. This artificial arrangement could hardly have stood, but it was almost immediately broken up by the death of the youth who was to have received such a perilous inheritance. The second Partition Treaty gave 1700.
Spain to the young Archduke, who was to give up Lombardy to the Duke of Lorraine. These laudable efforts, however, to preserve the balance without war, pleased the English quite as little as the French. William's plan of forming a standing army had made him exceedingly unpopular. The Tories opposed him with success in all his policy, and when the two secret treaties were found out, no general European ideas of balance could find favour, however far-sighted, in comparison with the dread which the English entertained of being forced into European complications in order to benefit Holland and Germany, and of being once more dragooned by a military force at home. The fate of the Darien Settlement had equally irritated the Scots.

When the Spanish king died in 1700 it was found that he had been persuaded to yield to the anger of his people at their vast empire being treated in this high-handed fashion. Unwisely, but not unnaturally, they preferred to keep their

national inheritance, at the price, as it turned out, of losing their place as one of the great nations of Europe. By the will of Charles II. the young Philip of France became his heir; and Louis XIV. eagerly accepted the crown for his grandson, without considering for a moment his previous engagements. This was the third stage of the transaction, and angry as they were, the Allies were forced to acknowledge this French prince as Philip V. of Spain. They knew, and Louis knew, that William's health was breaking up, and that England, under Tory influence, was vehemently resolved against any further war. William seemed about to end his troubled reign with the failure of all the plans which he had accepted the Crown for the express purpose of pursuing. The Whigs and the king's Dutch favourites were thoroughly discredited; the resumption of his lavish grants to Elizabeth Villiers his mistress, and to others, was forced upon him; the ministers concerned in the Partition Treaties were impeached; and he dissolved Parliament in anger and distress. He retired from these painful party conflicts to his beloved Holland, having, however, already recurred to his original scheme of employing ministers from both parties.

But it was soon discovered that the opposition to William, now diseased and about to die, had gone beyond the national sentiment, and on September 6, 1701, an event occurred which changed the whole current of affairs. James II. died; immediately upon which Louis, throwing off every counsel of prudence and good faith, publicly recognised the Pretender, and had him proclaimed at Paris as "King of England and France." "Surely," says Ranke "the herald must have been an Irishman." This was the final failure of the attempt to settle Europe without a French preponderance. Louis, unsuspicious of the power to be developed in Marlborough, was resolved to make one last effort, and, under the cloak of magnanimity towards his clients, to defy the Allies, who could evidently no longer count on the heroic William. England, on the other hand, made up its mind instantly, and rushed to arms. It had, indeed, no choice. Louis lost no time in driving the Dutch garrisons out of the frontier towns, and threatening England with the suppression of her commerce in the Western seas. Thus the new Par-

liament of 1701 opened with a majority of Whigs, who were joined by the Tories in exhibiting an almost unanimous eagerness for war. Supplies were urged on, and William's last energies were employed in meeting the wishes of the people to settle the English Succession.

"The pretended Prince of Wales" was now attainted of high treason, and an Oath of Abjuration passed, making the "Act of Settlement" binding on all Members of Parliament and office-holders. That great Act, which has established the present Royal House on the throne, under certain conditions, from those days to this, was the work of the thoroughly representative Parliament of 1701. The choice of the Guelphs of Hanover was not, as often supposed, a mere escape from the difficulty presented by the Papist members of the Stuart line who stood nearer in blood. It was a fixed national judgment in favour of a House for which there had formerly been a passionate affection in the person of James I.'s daughter Elizabeth, Queen of Bohemia, and which had shown courage, ability, and steady Protestant principles ever since. The Electress Sophia, the now ancient daughter of Elizabeth, was a remarkable person in many ways; her son George was a brave and capable officer, who was afterwards placed in command of the Imperial troops by Marlborough's determined use of his influence with the Emperor. Though at his accession in 1714 George I. was far down upon the roll of descent, we shall see presently how little reason there has been to regret the national choice, to which, by the way, it may be remarked that the Princess Anne gave her consent. 1701.

The other leading provisions of the Act of Settlement, or "Succession Act," as it finally stood, must here be summarised. The Established Church of England was secured under the Act, and the sovereign must belong to it. Foreigners were excluded from the Government; England was not to be obliged to defend Hanover, and the king must not leave the British Isles without permission of Parliament. The judges' position was defined by a life tenure "*quamdiu se bene gesserint*." "This Act," says Hallam, "was the seal of our Constitutional Laws."

Marlborough had come to the front in William's latter days, for when the last of Anne's nineteen children, the Duke

of Gloucester, had died in 1700, she and her friends became all-important. William made him commander-in-chief in Holland the next year, gradually combining all military affairs at home and abroad in his hands, as the only man capable of supporting the part which he intended England to play in the coming war. As this great man is about to become the first figure in Europe, we may observe here that, though his double dealing in relation to the dethroned family can never be defended, the charges made against his character in modern books are a good deal overdrawn, and many have been traced to the most untrustworthy sources.

Again, with regard to the two serious charges against William III. himself, as to the Massacre of Glencoe, and the treatment of the Darien Company: neither of these can be disproved; but it may be said of his conduct, in both cases, that he was misled rather than wilfully cruel or treacherous. We have seen that William was by no means a perfect character, but he was a great statesman and a great soldier. The simplicity of his life contrasted favourably with the artificial pomp of Louis XIV., and his public spirit, good sense, and conciliatory temper combined to give him a high place in history. He behaved honourably to the Church of England, allowing Mary, while she lived, to appoint bishops, and after her death passing her office over to an Episcopal Commission; and he was the first king to understand Parliamentary Government. But how much higher still do we place him amongst the great men of all time in Europe as the unflinching representative of national and religious freedom against a European tyranny at once crushing in politics and cruelly bigoted in religion! It seems but right that when he died, worn out, on March 8, 1702, he should just have lived long enough to see the English firmly united in the resolution to carry to a successful issue the two objects of his life, the resistance to Louis, and the Protestant succession to the throne of England.

Queen Anne.

Had William's goodness and popularity equalled the greatness which he displayed both in conception and action, the hero of the Revolution would have been styled "William the

Great." His successor was styled "the good Queen Anne," and has never lost a title which she certainly deserved. In later times indeed it has been thought sufficient to treat her memory as if she had been a mere puppet of her friend the Duchess of Marlborough, and derived her title of "Good" from her decorous "dulness." The mere outline of her career ought to confute this unjust verdict. Let us describe her as she appeared to those who knew her, rejecting indeed the abuse of those who, like the Duchess, had once fawned on her, and then brought on themselves their own disgrace.

In the first place, Anne reigned in the hearts of her people not only as representing them in a manner which they respected and liked, but also as the unobjectionable scion of the old stock with the elder branch of which they had reluctantly parted. This gave her a great advantage. Her heart, as she said in her first speech, was "entirely English." She had been excellently brought up, though she was not learned, and Lord Dartmouth, a very competent judge, tells us she was "the best-bred person in her dominions." Her "capacity," we are told, "was naturally good," her address and manner of speaking admirable. We may say that her good sense generally led her to right conclusions, and that she had spirit enough to make herself felt at every crisis of the times, both at home and abroad. The Union of Scotland with England, which shares with the war the chief place of importance in the reign, was largely due to her personal exertions. She supported the war, with her friend Marlborough at its head, with all the strength she possessed; but when she was convinced that the time for peace had arrived, she was dissatisfied with Marlborough's conduct in regard to it. Thus she broke with him, and throwing herself upon the best Minister she could find, employed St John to negotiate the Peace of Utrecht. We shall see that the policy was sound, though the means, perhaps necessarily, crooked. She has been called the last of our sovereigns to exercise effective personal influence upon the Government, but the disputed Succession required that the sovereign's voice should be heard. Her merit was that she understood her people, and took care that the forms of Constitutional Government should not be so worked as to suppress their legitimate desires. William had to

learn by experience; Anne had a large experience to begin with, and her clear, womanly instincts served to keep her straight.

Further, the Queen's domestic life was beyond all praise. Like William, she lived simply, and was thus able not only to grant enormous sums out of her private purse to carry on the war by which Louis was at last struck down, but at the same time to dispense with the "First-fruits of Livings," both in England and Ireland. These Henry VIII. had taken from the Pope and vested in the Crown, but Anne was the first of his successors to restore them to the Church. As "Queen Anne's Bounty," they fitly perpetuate her goodness. Her court was pure. How seldom could that be said! It was no doubt decorously dull in the eyes of the libertines who had found a place in all the previous courts, and were to find it again. She loved the Church of England, not from the mere accident of birth, but from a sound education, chiefly under Bishop Compton; and she exercised a conscientious independence in the appointment of bishops and deans. This indeed seems to be one of the causes of the detraction to which her memory has been subjected. When the Duchess of Marlborough quarrelled with her, it was with true feminine spite that she called her "a godly, praying idiot;" but it was Anne's religion which taught her to do her duty. This it is which makes it our duty to examine the reasons she had for everything she did. Her actions were not the mere outcome of a woman's whims, as too often represented.

No doubt the over-familiarity between her as princess and Sarah Jennings, a lady of her court, which coloured the queen's whole life, and the bitterness of the quarrel at last, have been the chief ground of the attacks on her memory. They leave an impression of weakness; but we ought to consider the circumstances. In such a great and difficult position Anne, who could not receive much valuable counsel from her husband, required, in the midst of revolutions, a friend, and Sarah Jennings could not be an ordinary friend. We at least owe a glorious page of history to the fact that this lady's husband was able, through the queen's energetic aid, to scatter his enemies at home and abroad. When it became a necessary duty for Anne to break loose from an intolerable tyranny, which was destroying not only her self-respect but her

usefulness to her country, we may indeed refer the necessity to her own original fault; but we can hardly blame her for using the only weapon available, the Mrs Masham, for whom there is not much to be said. It is not creditable to historians that they should dwell on these domestic struggles as if they were themselves the causes of great events. Those events were the results of the ripening of the national will, a will which made itself felt through such means as were available at the moment. We may fairly say this of the movement which we connect with the Sacheverel case, the dismissal of Marlborough, and the Peace of Utrecht.

Even the cry of the "Church in danger," which was chargeable with hypocrisy and open to ridicule, was, like the above, an indication of the popular Toryism, which abhorred the Whig traditions left by the Revolution. Led by the clergy, the great mass of the people were quite prepared to attack the great Whig lords and bishops who, as they thought, were coercing the queen. If we inquire how it was that popular Toryism came to select the Church for its rallying flag, we shall see that it was precisely of a piece with the enthusiasm for the Seven Bishops, and the resolution to support the Test Act. The Church had proved itself, ever since Elizabeth's time, the one steady institution of the country. Borne down for the moment in the Great Rebellion through its own extravagances, the people loved it the more when it emerged from the deeps, and welcomed it as the true protection from "Popery and Wooden Shoes." Its subsequent history would have been very different, had it not been for the taint of Jacobitism which seemed for a long time ineradicable.

CHAPTER III.

ANNE (*continued*).

We must now take the chief events of Marlborough's glorious campaigns for our outline, observing indeed their relations with other affairs in England and on the Continent; but

while the interest of the wars remains for ever, the littlenesses which gather round them become, in the scale of proportion, insignificant.

It is the fourth and last period of the Grand Monarque. He has challenged the Allies to the final issue, and Marlborough, at their head, replies,—commencing operations, as usual with the English, in the Netherlands. The great fortified barrier-towns, which the Peace of Ryswick had left with the French, once captured, the road to Paris would be short, and a decisive battle would conclude the war. Louis had an exceptional advantage in the possession of such a barrier against Europe, and in the close alliance with Bavaria, which projected like a wedge into the heart of Germany. He had also the inestimable advantage of a single will to wield his forces, while the more or less opposite interests of the Empire, of England, of Holland, Hanover, Hesse, Prussia, and Denmark, together with the bitterness of party strife in England, must have overwhelmed any less majestic spirit than that of Marlborough.

The first object of the General was to break through the barrier and secure the line of the Maas, where he could operate both with the Imperial forces and the Dutch in defence of the Rhine. The capture of Venloo, Ruremonde, and Liége announced to the world that Marshal Boufflers, William's old antagonist, was once more overmatched, and
1702. Marlborough's earldom was now exchanged for the ducal coronet.

1703. Again, in 1703, the Allies take town after town—Bonn, Huy, Limbourg; but the French armies are numerous enough to neglect the danger, and make their way into Germany by way of Strasburg under Marshal Tallard, and into Bavaria under Marshal Villars. This would not have been possible had the Dutch worked with Marlborough; but it was not much easier to secure their aid than it was for the Republican officers of France at the end of the century to operate in company with the frothy civilians who were placed by their side to watch and report upon them. The Empire was also hard pressed on its eastern frontier by the Hungarians, under Radotzky. It had scarcely ever appeared to be in greater danger. Prince Eugene's talents, however, like those of Marlborough, turned the scale, and together

these great men concerted the fine operations which issued next year in the battle of Blenheim. Each of them was in himself worth an army. 1704.

There is a good account of that battle in Lord Stanhope's 'Queen Anne,' and an interesting comparison of its merits with that of Waterloo, by the Duke of Wellington himself, in the 'Stanhope Miscellanies.' The interest, however, of the comparison lies still more in the balance of the difficulties each of these generals had to overcome during the previous campaigns, by means of which previous work their consummate organisation of victory was formed. In Marlborough's case we have to consider the necessary secrecy of his plans, which alone prevented their ruin by the Dutch, and the way in which he surmounted the difficulties presented by his rival commander, Prince Louis of Baden; but perhaps these were less than those which political parties presented at home. He had to be constantly moving between England and the Continent in order to deal with these matters by his own adroit and persuasive presence. Everything was in his hands, and yet they were not free. The Tories, like the Dutch, were resolute against offensive war, and would have prevented the grand march into Bavaria if they had had the least inkling of it.

But though we must not attempt to describe the magnificent battle of Blenheim, we can at least state its results in a very few words. It set a limit to French supremacy in Europe for nearly a century; Bavaria learnt what the French alliance really meant; Austria was saved; the German Principalities were delivered from the weight which had been crushing them for half a century; and Hungary was pacified. The way was now cleared for delivering the Low Countries. In the blaze of the triumph of the Allies the capture of Gibraltar by Rooke in this same year, and Leake's defeat of the French fleet sent to its relief, excited comparatively little attention; yet the first has coloured English history ever since, and the last broke up the French navy. It added in no small degree to the rejoicings of the English that all these victories were at last won by Englishmen, under an English queen whom they loved.

One drawback had to be set off against these victories. The Duke of Berwick, James II.'s natural son by Marl-

borough's sister, won at the head of a French army the first victories in the Spanish War. "The War of the Spanish Succession" was really waged for the Emperor, whose son, the Archduke Charles, was to drive out Philip V., and so put in force one part of the Partition Treaties which Louis had broken. It went on parallel lines with the great war of the Allies, but laboured under still greater difficulties. It was not then understood that Spain was a country which a small army might conquer, but which even a very large one would find it hard to retain. The difficulty of Philip V.'s defence lay chiefly in the jealousies which still remained between the two component parts of Spain, Castile and Aragon. The Catalans, with their noble capital, Barcelona, were still in many respects a separate people, and "Charles III.," as he was vainly styled, established himself there without much difficulty, by the help of Lord Peterborough, in 1705. To Ruvigny, the Huguenot Earl of Galway, a much better general than has been commonly reckoned, was assigned the command of the English troops on the western frontier of Spain, and in 1706 he made a successful march upon Madrid; but the difficulties from the western side, where Philip and the French were popular, were too great for more than a transient success. The war was in fact starved by both English and Germans, whose energies were strained by the demands of the northern campaigns. Sir Cloudesley Shovel and Leake, good admirals as they were, could not seriously affect the result, which was eventually decisive for the French and Castilians against the English, Germans, and Catalans; nor did the French ever after lose their predominance in Spain till Napoleon destroyed it by his tyrannical proceedings.

1705. The success of the English arms in Eastern Spain, in 1705, compensated in some degree for the small results achieved by the great allied army on the French border in that year. The invasion of France, which was concerted between Marlborough and Eugene, and intended to be made before the French could take the field, was prevented by the failure of the Dutch and German generals to pay the slightest attention to Marlborough's orders. It was to have been made by Sarre-louis, taking Treves as a base, and would, it was expected, have finished the war; but all the strategical successes against Villeroy, which were leading up to a united

movement, were rendered futile, and the campaign became a war of fortresses, in which, however, Huy was once more taken by the English.

The next year made amends. It was the year of the great victory of Ramilies (near Namur), and obtained the name of the *annus mirabilis*. The battle had been forced on by Louis's orders, in the belief that the gallant Prince of Wurtemburg could not join Marlborough in time to fight. However, he did contrive to join him, and in a couple of hours Villeroy was hopelessly beaten, with the loss of some 15,000 or 20,000 men against a loss of 2500 sustained by the conquerors. This decisive battle gave all Flanders to the Allies just as completely as Blenheim had restored Germany. Marlborough was now at the height of his fame, and was offered by the Emperor the post of Governor-General of the Netherlands; but the jealousy of the Dutch obliged him to refuse. Eugene's victory at Turin at the same time drove the French out of Italy, and with the capture of Madrid in addition, their pride was so lowered that they sued for peace. The Allies refused. Marlborough was against it—not, as has been supposed, on mere selfish grounds. Perhaps that can hardly be said of the Whigs, now rising to power on the war-cry, and to whom peace would have been destruction. It is no doubt true that the objects of the war had not yet been fully obtained, and the English generally, after these victories, were not disposed to stop till they were. It is easy to judge after the event; but, of course, if it could have been foreseen that they never would be obtained, the opportunity for making peace should have been seized. 1706.

The still greater event of the year for England was the Union with Scotland; but it was not ratified till 1707. It was a matter of such great difficulty, and had been preceded by so many failures, that it is only wonderful it was carried without recourse to arms. But, ever since the French had declared war in the cause of the Pretender, the question of a single government by the same sovereign in both countries had become vital. The Jacobites, making common cause with those who, both in England and Scotland, objected to the Union on religious grounds, resisted to the last, but they were overborne by the public feeling of England, represented

by the queen under the advice of Marlborough, Somers, and Godolphin, and by the commercial classes in Scotland, which carried with them the intelligence of the country. These last were silently influenced by observing the impotence of Scotland in the matter of the quarrel concerning the Darien Company, the abuses connected with the existing method of Scottish government by the English, and the ill-repute of their judges, over whom they had no direct control.

But as in the case of the Irish Union in 1800, nothing could be effected without bribes, which were supposed to be a sort of compensation, nor without threats, which the exhaustion of France rendered significant. The Scots fought hard for a Federation; the English insisted on Incorporation —one nationality, one seal, one coinage, the same weights and measures, the same Duties and Excise in the proportion of combined ratios,—above all, on one Parliament, with sixteen representative Scottish peers, and forty-five Scottish members of the Lower House. But it was found necessary, after all that had happened, to make it a fundamental law of the Union that each country should retain its established form of religion, Presbyterianism in Scotland, the Church in England. Nor could their respective laws and customs be made identical; but these might be altered in Parliament in certain cases. The "United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland" was thus constituted only just in time; for the Rebellion of 1715, backed up by a portion of the Scottish upper classes, the Highlanders, and the Episcopalians,— which was in reality the expression of a too vivid nationality, —could now be punished as treason.

1707. With the passing of the Act of Union and the glory of victory, the Whigs emerged out of the position of a mere leading portion of the Government into distinct supremacy; for they, represented by the old "Junto," alone had the war at heart. Two rising Tories, of a useful and moderate sort, Harley and St John, were allowed to join their ranks. It was in reality a Government by Marlborough, who ruled through his two sons-in-law, Sunderland and Godolphin. This arrangement would have saved much trouble at an earlier date; but it now invited detraction as a "family party," and appeared to deprive the people of any control

over a war which they by no means desired should oppress them with taxes for ever. Thus the Government had no really firm foundation, and soon began to decline again. Its downfall was set in motion by the arrogance which it not unnaturally inspired in the Duchess of Marlborough, whose familiarity had already bred contempt for her sovereign; and this rapidly developed into hatred and insult.

The contrast to the preceding four years, presented by the campaigns of 1707, encouraged Marlborough's enemies. He won no victory, and in Spain Lord Galway and General Stanhope were soundly beaten by the Duke of Berwick at the battle of Almanza. Prince Eugene was also foiled in his movement upon South France by the action of the Emperor himself. This set men upon considering the question of continuing the war. A strong counter-current began to flow. The two Tory ministers concerted their intrigues, and the queen learnt to rely upon a rival to the Duchess in her household, who fanned the growing quarrel between "Mrs Morley and Mrs Freeman." Through Mrs Masham and Harley, Anne by degrees became aware of the popular feeling, but was quite powerless to act till 1710. The success of Marlborough in 1707 in getting rid of the intervention of Charles XII. of Sweden, and turning his attention off upon Russia, is the redeeming public feature of the year. It is difficult to say which was this able man's most peculiar gift, his diplomatic or his military talent.

Victory again smiled on the British arms in 1708. The battle of Oudenarde, fought for the possession of Lille, one of the greatest cities of France, was even more celebrated for the capture of that city under the eyes of Marshal Vendôme, than for the battle itself. Vendôme was the best of the French marshals; but though at the head of 100,000 men, he was completely out-generalled by Marlborough. This grand feat of arms again forced Louis to sue for peace; and it was the fault of the Junto, not this time of their general, that the French proposals were met by impossible demands which Louis had too much proper spirit to entertain. Nor was the duke able to follow up his victory by marching upon Paris, since he was stopped once more by the dissensions of the Allies. Who but he could have had the patience to go on? He was in reality, however, scarcely a 1708.

free man. The Junto ruled him through his wife, and private interests guided them all. It was high time that the knot should be cut.

1709. The battle of Malplaquet, in 1709, did the advocates of the war more harm than good. Though a decided victory for Marlborough, which laid Paris once more open to a rapid march, the loss he sustained nearly doubled that of the enemy, and people asked where this was to stop. The queen saw that she must interpose; but was she able to do so? Would her throne stand the shock of dismissing the greatest man in Europe, supported by the strongest ministry which had been in power for years? Such a case had never occurred since Edward IV. broke with the Kingmaker. The queen's prudence was rewarded at last, but in a way which not even the wildest dream could have imagined. The violent political sermon of Sacheverel, an obscure country parson, changed the face of Europe. But his abuse of the Whigs was only the chance-blown spark which ignited a combustible mass of fuel previously laid. The nation rose to its feet, and saw in Anne their representative struggling against a corrupt oligarchy engaged in pressing on a war that might well have ended long before. The Junto was hated, and the general's laurels were tarnished in the eyes of the people by self-seeking.

Just about this time Marlborough, incited by his wife and the Junto, made a desperate and most ill-timed bid for supreme power, and insisted on being created Captain-General for life. But his ambition had at last tried the queen too far; and feeling that she had the support of the people, she, to her great credit, refused. Then came the impeachment of Sacheverel by the Whigs—a profound error on their part

1710. —followed, in 1710, by the trial and virtual acquittal of the accused, which, absurdly enough, excited very nearly the same vehement and widespread rejoicings as the Acquittal of the Seven Bishops. Anne now felt she was safe; and leaning on the support of the Duke of Shrewsbury, who so often came to the front at a crisis, began to dismiss the Whigs one after another. Marlborough, venturing to remonstrate upon the treatment of some of his officers, found the queen offended and resolute; and next year the breach, ever-widening between her and the duchess, was made irreparable on

the celebrated occasion when the enraged woman threw her gold key of office on the floor, and ordered her husband to pick it up and give it to the queen. Burnet tells the story, but even he fails to bring out the full extent of the meanness exhibited by the Duchess, and the abject position to which she had reduced the wonderful man who had conquered every one except his own wife. She, at least, made herself a leading historical character, and, when she was once subdued, the national will prevailed.

Though Marlborough took fortresses in 1710 and 1711, and maintained the overpowering position of the Allies, while at the same time France was sinking under the weight of the war, he gradually lost his hold on England. The Tory Parliament, which came in on the shoulders of Sacheverel, was, of course, against the Duke; and even the House of Lords represented the people in refusing to grant him the usual vote of thanks for his services. Thus, after the latter year, the general who had never failed to win a battle or take a fortress, dismissed from all his great offices on doubtful charges, sank into insignificance. It was honourable to him, and characteristic of England, that the thought of placing himself at the head of the Government by force never seems to have entered the head of a man who was sufficiently ambitious, and notoriously fond of money. His intrigues with the Pretender were the nearest approach to such a thing that he ever permitted himself. The Spanish War came virtually to an end this year, for though the Allies once more took Madrid, Marshal Vendôme extinguished all their hopes at Villa Viciosa.

In 1711, Harley and St John, who had been chiefly con- 1711.
cerned in the change of government, were intrusted by the queen with the task of opening private negotiations for peace, while the House of Lords was forced into harmony with the new Government by the creation of twelve peers. This is the sole instance which has yet occurred of the exercise of a constitutional power which it is almost equally necessary that the sovereign should possess, and that he should never use. "Did they vote separately or by their foreman?" asked the witty Lord Wharton, who with his friends began to rally round the question of the Hanoverian Succession, by way of answer to the Tory watchword of "Peace." St John, now

Lord Bolingbroke, succeeded at last, in concert with the queen, in carrying the Peace of Utrecht; but he did so under pressure of an opposition of the gravest kind, which of course enabled the French to make better terms than their position justified. He had quarrelled with Harley, now Earl of Oxford, in the process, and used his successful negotiation as a means of jostling him out of his way. But he had committed the fatal error of resting his policy upon the Jacobites. Even if Anne's sudden death had not destroyed all his plans in a moment, he could never have carried them; for the Tory party which supported him were in the main Protestant Churchmen, and preferred even the Hanoverians to a Papist king.

The conspiracy was once more upset by the decisive action of Shrewsbury. Bolingbroke's flight and Harley's imprisonment put an end to the ministerial career of two unprincipled men who were far from representing the Tory politics of Clarendon's school, or indeed anything else but themselves. Long afterwards Bolingbroke appears in another and a better character; Harley never recovered any political position.

1713. The Peace of Utrecht must not however be placed to the discredit of its maker. Long the battle-ground of party, it may now stand on its own merits. The Whigs, like their modern apologists, refused to see that the death of the Emperor Joseph I., in 1711, entirely changed the condition of affairs. England had not fought to set up an Imperial, instead of a French, tyranny. Thus the Allies had to be content with the provision that France and Spain should not be governed by the same sovereign, and France was reduced to her old limits, with barrier-towns in possession of German and Dutch garrisons. The gains of England were indeed disproportionate to her sacrifices, but if regarded from the side of the interests of commerce, which really even then governed war and politics, it was enough that she secured Gibraltar, Minorca, and Newfoundland, the demolition of piratical Dunkirk, the Protestant Succession, and even the shameful Assiento,—for though vile in itself, it was not then considered so, and it carried with it eventually the West Indian trade. Amongst the crooked processes by which the Peace was brought about, too much has been made of the English desertion of her Imperialist and Dutch allies. They

refused to concur; but as soon as they were left alone they found out their impotence. England had done quite enough for them, and the terms they obtained were by no means bad.

If anything could prove the personal importance of the good queen, it would be the excitement caused by her death. 1714.
The proverbial saying which expressed the popular alarm has come down to our own day.

CHAPTER IV.

GEORGE I. (1714–1727).

THE nineteenth century pretends to be so much wiser than the eighteenth that we have been very generally called upon to treat the memory of the earlier sovereigns of the House of Brunswick with contempt, and even with vulgar ridicule. Educated people know better, and scarcely need to be reminded that, in the troubled times bequeathed to Great Britain by the earlier Stuarts, the people were moved by something beyond superficial likes and dislikes. Of course they disliked the foreign manners and companions of the kings whose strain of Stuart blood had been diluted with Dutch and German ingredients; but the most ignorant were profoundly conscious that their nation had been elevated, out of the contemptible state to which the elder branch of the Stuarts had reduced it, to the headship of Europe, and that the safety of its Protestant character had been secured from foreign dictation, by William III. and Marlborough. And they knew still better that the enormous sacrifices they had been required to make for these purposes could only be compensated by a lasting Peace. They were perfectly aware that a strong man was required to guide the helm through the dangers which threatened on every side; and they knew their man, his parentage, and his career.

The only question with the British people was,—Can we trust the Brunswick family, the Guelph Electors of Hanover? Can we trust the experienced general whom William III. had

selected, and whom the nation had for some years accepted as Anne's successor? They remembered that he had begun to serve against the French as a youth of fifteen, had maintained intimate relations, as an Imperial officer in high command, with Marlborough, and though he had no pretensions to be a great general, had parted, in a campaign against the great Marshal Villars, on equal terms, without giving him any advantage. He had indeed, like Marlborough, opposed the Peace of Utrecht, and was in close alliance with the Whigs. The wise old Electress, his mother, would have been more acceptable, but she was very aged, and passed off the stage just before Queen Anne. Her son could not indeed speak English, but her grandson could. The family seemed likely to establish itself. Nor were the objections which occur to us now felt in the same way then. The Hanoverian connection, which became so unpopular, was looked upon as so much gain, especially in its relation to Holland, where George had far more influence than even William himself, to say nothing of Marlborough, who had very little. It was a bad sign of the age that adulterous habits were so much the rule with the great that he was not considered much the worse for them.

Again, George was said to be despotic, and his mother thought so; but the English had developed party government by this time, and knew they could now make their kings conform to it. Foreign sovereigns were their only refuge from danger and ignominy, but there were not a few redeeming qualities in the character of this family. The Guelphs were brave and honourable, business-like and sensible; and these were English qualities. They would all be English enough in a few generations. So it turned out. In less than half a century George III. was able to copy Queen Anne, and claim that he was "born and bred a Briton."

In short, the common-sense of the people accepted the dynasty. Even the Tories, though they knew it meant dark days for them, took a high patriotic course. A considerable portion of them were indeed Jacobites, but these were insignificant at a crisis, and gradually died out, not however without leaving, like the wasp, their sting in history. What however no one knew nor could have foreseen was, that this dynasty

which we are told to despise, the first three of these very kings, were to guide the nation to glorious destinies—the first to prepare, the second to form, the third to establish, the greatest empire the world has ever yet seen, and to make the people of the British Islands and their colonists not only the arbiters of Europe, but the leading rulers of Asia, Africa, and America.

The outlines of George I.'s short reign must embrace a view of its foreign policy, which was much influenced by Jacobite intrigues, an account of the king's ministers, especially Walpole, and some notice of its financial peculiarities, which were the result of the famous South Sea Bubble.

The new dynasty was decidedly strengthened by the failure of the first Jacobite Rebellion, that of 1715. The Government treated it on the whole with judgment, and every one saw that the "Pretender"—so styled officially by Queen Anne's Government — was wanting in all kingly qualities. Precautions against the incessant intrigues of the party were never after this rebellion seriously relaxed. As to the ministers, we need not dwell upon either Townshend or Stanhope, who were useful, though not first-rate, men. But when we come to Walpole in 1721, we are to deal with the most powerful minister England has ever seen, and the one who held office for the longest time. Both Townshend and Stanhope were recommended to the king by their intimate knowledge of foreign affairs, in which Walpole had already been concerned along with them. All three were of course the representatives of the Whigs. To no other party could George commit himself. He represented the "principles of the Revolution," and was forced to stand or fall by those who had adopted those principles without reserve. 1715.

The alliances by which the peace was maintained for many years must be grouped round the French Regency. The death of Louis XIV. had removed the central pivot of European politics, and the Regent Orleans, a bad man but a clever statesman, perceived that France might even yet recover her position by keeping on a footing with England of exactly the opposite kind from that of the great king. Strangely enough, as we shall see, this new policy, when further shaped by the hands of Fleury, obtained even a greater position for France than all the fifty years of force

and fraud which had preceded it. A totally new Triple
1716. Alliance now took shape, composed of Great Britain, France, and Austria, the first effect of which was to drive the Pretender out of France, and the second to enable the Allies to put a stop to the bold schemes of Cardinal Alberoni, the Spanish minister. The adhesion of Holland soon turned it into a Quadruple Alliance.

This was the age of adventurers—adventurers of a clever and unscrupulous type, who represented the growing intelligence of the times, and, in countries where the want of constitutional government caused a want of statesmen, pushed themselves to the front of the noblemen and generals who had been brought forward by incessant wars. Alberoni and Ripperda in Spain, Gortz in Sweden, and Dubois in France exhibited the natural defects of such persons, and for the most part, it may be said, injured their respective countries and ruined themselves. Alberoni's plans were the nearest to success. They were patriotic, and widely supported outside of Spain; but the British Government completely shattered them by simply adopting the minister's own policy. As he had invaded Sicily, which by the Peace of Utrecht had fallen to the Duke of Savoy, without any declaration of war, Sir George Byng was ordered, also without any declaration of war, to attack the Spanish covering fleet wherever he met them. Thus was fought the battle of Cape
1718. Passaro, in which the Spaniards were destroyed with scarcely any loss to the English. This catastrophe, and the death of Charles XII. of Sweden, whom Alberoni had engaged to invade England, produced an entire collapse of the Cardinal's scheme, soon followed by his disgrace, while Gortz, his accomplice, was beheaded. Russia, which had also been set in motion, was prevented by an English fleet from crushing Sweden at the moment of its distress, and the general repose of Europe was resumed. The King of Sicily, however, exchanged that island for Sardinia, which gave him a new title, and Sicily was assigned to the Emperor. These skilful combinations were even more due to the king than to Lord Stanhope; but neither of them understood British interests when they lightly entertained the idea of conciliating Spain by the cession of Gibraltar. The other ministers, and the country generally, plainly perceived that it was the key of the

Mediterranean, fairly won by the Mistress of the Seas, and they preferred that Spain should do its worst against the rock-defences of the fortress, as she often did, and in which she as often failed.

Two events in constitutional history connect this period with our own day. The Septennial Act was only a return to the old term of Parliament which William III. had been forced to replace by the Triennial Act. Though merely introduced in order to give stability to the new dynasty, it has been found to work well ever since. The other has been useful as a warning. The attempt to pass the Peerage Bill, limiting the number of peers, was happily blocked by Walpole's sagacity. It would have weakened the House of Lords instead of strengthening it, and have stopped the avenues open to a legitimate ambition.

This brings us to Walpole, whose history is the history of England. The South Sea Bubble and its mighty effects are really, as said above, to be considered a mere episode in his career. To understand that career we have to note his long training for his work, his having been, till he arrived at manhood, only a second son, and so saved from the destiny of an ordinary Norfolk squire; his superior advantages as a Foundationer at Eton and Cambridge; his youthful rivalry with the brilliant St John, which acted as a perpetual spur. The whole reign of Anne afforded him the finest political education—under Somers, Halifax, Godolphin, and Marlborough—which a man could have. His leaders placed him early in office. He was Secretary for War, and was chosen a manager of the Sacheverel Trial. And it is here worthy of notice that he never lost sight of the political lesson he then learnt concerning the strength of the Church of England. Though wholly unsympathetic with it, he always insisted on its being left alone, and that its status should never be lowered.

As chief champion of the Whigs at the close of Anne's reign he naturally found his way to the Tower; and on the accession of George I. as naturally took a place in the Government—a statesman of already a vast experience, and of the sufficiently ripe age of thirty-eight. He was not displeased to have the impeachment of his rival Bolingbroke intrusted to his hands, and he took care that the one man he

feared should never stand in his way. When Townshend, his kinsman and patron, was dismissed, he resigned the seals of office; but it is a tribute to the king's judgment that he returned the seals to him no less than ten times: they were as often refused.

In Opposition Walpole showed to disadvantage. His factious leadership endangered even the wise measures taken to defeat Alberoni and the Jacobites; but he was the first great minister who perceived that it was from the House of Commons that the country should be governed, and at that time of all others. He saw from the first that under the circumstances of a disputed Succession, a policy of rest and internal development was absolutely necessary, and everything else was to give way to that policy. We have learnt to discard the belief that his wonderful success was due to his skill in the corruption of the House. In that art he was by no means so dexterous as others, nor could he have reigned by its means for twenty years. At his fall very few of such charges could be proved. His success was really founded upon the great pains he took with every business in hand, and his perfect skill in the arts of debate. But here his merits end. We shall see in the next reign how the low tone of public and private virtue which he set reacted on his policy, and brought on at last the very war which he had for some years staved off by unworthy means.

1720. The affair of the South Sea Bubble brought Walpole to the headship of the Government, and to the leadership, under the king, of Europe. He was the one man who saw his way to right the country after that universal disturbance, and what was more, to strengthen by its means the institution of the National Debt, which when kept within reasonable limits, in a country like Great Britain, has always been a source of prosperity. Law's Mississippi Scheme in France had just involved in ruin half a million of people. England followed suit. The well-known story of the "Bubble" need not be repeated. It is enough to say that out of an apparently hopeless difficulty Walpole safely brought the country by (1) fining the directors, and dividing their fortunes amongst the sufferers; (2) by forgiving the company a large share of the debt, and so enabling it to weather the storm; and (3) by granting back to all the proprietors of stock one-

third of their property,—and that at no great expense to the national funds.

In fact, this celebrated crisis was only one proof of the abounding prosperity of the people. Ten years without war-taxes had given them an overplus of funds for which no existing investments offered sufficient profit. France was in much the same condition. Both countries were hasting to be rich, and casting longing eyes upon the trade with the West Indies and Central America which Spain pretended to monopolise. Both were planning how to expand their colonies. The wars of the next reign were to arise in great measure out of this state of things, but also perhaps as much out of the sudden rise of Russia and Prussia upon the ruins of Sweden and Holland. These gallant little nations had collapsed, one under the wasteful campaigns of the half-mad hero, Charles XII., the other under the over-pressure of their magnificent struggle for freedom against France.

Three years before George's death, the aged Fleury became Prime Minister of France, and Walpole continued with him the same harmonious policy which had already been so useful under Regent Orléans. All combinations against the peace of Europe were thus controlled and came to nothing. Spain was still the chief disturbing element. It had been grossly insulted by the young Louis XV., who repudiated his betrothal to Philip V.'s daughter, and married a daughter of the King of Poland; but its irritation took shape at first against England, and it sought to strengthen itself by the Treaty of Vienna with Austria. Walpole met this by the Treaty of Hanover, between England, France, and Prussia, and replied to the Spanish attack upon Gibraltar by sending a fleet to defend it, another being despatched to the Baltic, and a third to Porto Bello on the Isthmus of Panama.

Admiral Hosier, who commanded the blockading fleet off this last place, had strict orders to prevent the galleons from leaving the port, but not to capture either them or the fort. This led to the great loss of ships and men which was afterwards immortalised by the ballad of "Hosier's Ghost." We shall see presently how it was connected with a feeble policy towards Spain, which in its earlier stages could only be defended by Walpole's profound sense of danger from the incessant intrigues of the Jacobites. Any indirect method

of bringing Spain or the Emperor to reason was held preferable to a general war, which would be sure to crystallise round the Pretender, as the forces of Roman Catholic Europe had gathered around Mary Stuart. Gibraltar was indeed successfully defended, and the Emperor skilfully detached from the Spanish alliance; so that when George I. died he had no cause to complain of the dexterous minister whom he steadfastly supported from first to last.

The same watchful neutrality as to the religious interests of the country conserved peace at home; but the price was high. The Convocation of the clergy, revived by William III., and continuing its sessions through the reign of Anne, had, under the furious struggle between High and Low Church, Jacobitism and Whiggery, which raged during the early years of George I., become a source of real danger to the peace of the country. As already said, it was not summoned after 1717. The Government should not be blamed for taking that course. The energies of the clergy, though they had received just provocation in the preferment of Hoadley, were consumed in unedifying wrangles which could not but take a political turn. Oxford University had to be kept at peace by the famous "troop of horse." But though order was maintained, inactivity and carelessness took the place of a morbid activity; religion ceased to be a governing power in society; and a corruption of morals set in, not unlike, though not so bad as, the reactionary period of the Restoration. It was not till Wesley and his friends made their mark in the next reign that any change for the better began to take place.

Our outlines must include Ireland. We have seen that the rising of the Roman Catholic population in favour of James II. had unfortunately necessitated a government by "Protestant Ascendancy" and Penal Laws. Walpole's policy was to relax these laws gradually, without repealing them, just as the Dissenters in England were kept in good humour by annual Bills of Indemnity for breaches of the Test Act. This policy of expediency, the result of the past, at last gave Ireland a long period of much-needed tranquillity; and the protection afforded by the local government to the oppressed Roman Catholics in the way of mitigation, gradually drew them into a loyal attitude which was unmistakably evinced both in 1715 and 1745. Material prosperity rapidly advanced, and

even the fanciful grievance of "Wood's Halfpence," fanned into flame by the diseased energy of Swift, soon evaporated when Walpole wisely withdrew them from circulation. It was useful in drawing attention to the importance of Irish sentiment; but the English commercial classes were still so selfish that the honest exertions of the Irish merchants were cramped by their blind jealousy.

The best proof of the wisdom of George I.'s reign is that he established his dynasty so firmly that his unexpected death made no difference whatever to the country. George II. succeeded as quietly as if his branch of the Royal House had been on the throne for centuries. We sometimes attribute all this to the greatness of Walpole. It was George I. who, clearly perceiving what the people of England desired, placed and kept him at the head of affairs.

CHAPTER V.

GEORGE II. (1727–1760).—PART I.

Up to the year 1742, when Sir Robert Walpole was hurled from power, the new reign was a mere continuation of the old. After that date it assumed a wholly different character. The interpretation of that second part, that momentous period when the British empire was founded, must however be sought in the uneventful period preceding it. And first as to the new king.

George II. was a man of much the same character as his father; he possessed the same distinguished courage, regularity, and business-like habits, the same sense of honour, and the same clear understanding of his position as a constitutional king. He was less clever, less reserved, more passionate, more covetous; but it must be remembered that he poured all the savings of his life into the coffers of his beloved Hanover in the hour of its danger. To England he was more acceptable than his father, both because he spoke English, and for the sake of his gifted and popular Queen

Caroline. His adulteries were no less flagrant than his father's, but he was scarcely more cursed by the ill behaviour of his son Frederick, Prince of Wales, than his father had been by his own conduct. These rebellious sons, however, served a constitutional purpose which mitigated the disgust of the nation: for when Whig Governments were, on account of the ever-present Jacobite disaffection, an absolute necessity, the Courts of the Princes of Wales afforded a safety-valve for Tory discontent, and nursed it till the time came for a proper balance of parties. It was in the camp of the worthless Frederick that Bolingbroke, Pulteney, and Pitt, under the name of the "Patriots," practised the use of the weapons which were to secure for Great Britain her modern position.

As to Queen Caroline, she was for the first ten years of the reign, at the end of which she died, a far more prominent figure than the king. To her he committed the ecclesiastical government of England, under Walpole's general supervision. Like Mary in the reign of William, she chose the bishops. The pupil of the celebrated Leibnitz, she was what was called a "Latitudinarian"; but she had religion at heart, formed a high standard, and appointed many good ecclesiastics. Her good sense and pleasing manners endeared her to the people; but we may not forget that she did not rise superior to a scandalous vindictiveness towards her eldest son, nor to the temptation to encourage her husband's adulteries as a means of retaining her own influence.

The best commentary on Walpole's commanding position under her zealous support and the king's growing admiration of him, is that there is literally no history whatever of the two or three years which succeeded the first settling down of the new reign. The Jacobites, amazed at the perfect ease of the Succession and the general contentment, as well as weakened by the recent death of their leaders, Mar, Wharton, and Atterbury, perceived that they must wait for better times. The King of Spain also discovered that he had no choice but to accept the preliminaries of a general peace.
1730. Gibraltar was not mentioned in the Treaty of Seville (1730), but none the less remained a cruel thorn in the Spanish side. Along with the continuous efforts of the English and their American colonists to participate in the Spanish Ameri-

can trade, the English possession of the Rock formed the motive for the Secret Treaties with France which now commenced.

In all but the most recent literature the "Family Compact" of 1761 is spoken of as the first of these Secret Treaties between the branches of the House of Bourbon. Ranke's valuable 'History of England' disclosed the existence of one which was really of greater importance, that of 1733. The wonderful fact that this Treaty has remained unknown for a century and a half has an important bearing on history,—no less than this. It has led statesmen and historians without number to take a false view of the methods by which the colonial empire of Great Britain was obtained, and of the motives which actuated its founders. Burke, the greatest authority in our language on such subjects, deliberately styled the war which arose out of these Spanish quarrels one of "plunder and extreme injustice"; and the British people, supposing there was nothing more to be said, have ever since submitted in silence to be ranked for that period with pirates and buccaneers. Had he known the facts, he neither could nor would have thus injured the fame of his country. But when we do know them, carelessness about past reputation is unworthy. It is indeed with Englishmen only another form of pride,—a barbarous overbearing form. 1733.

We have seen that Gibraltar, Minorca, and the Assiento were almost the only compensation obtained for Great Britain at the Peace of Utrecht, in return for the enormous sacrifices she had made,—the only spoils of war after such a series of magnificent victories. Both to friends and foes it appeared, however politic under the circumstances, to be a barren and ridiculous result. But no long time elapsed before France and Spain discovered, as Queen Anne and her Tory Ministers had foreseen, that these slender gains were by no means so insignificant as they had at first appeared; and deceived by the obstinately pacific government of Walpole, they determined on adopting a united but secret policy with a view to recover what had been lost. The fact is that the Rock of Gibraltar clove both France and Spain in two, while at the same time it gave the British a firm footing in the Mediterranean. Spain was only too well aware how ill-compacted were the different parts of the Peninsula, which

the ever-active British fleets at Gibraltar could deal with as they pleased. France asked why their great king had established Toulon as a first-class naval arsenal, if it was now to be for ever cut off from sending its fleets to join those of Brest and Rochefort. In some way or other this state of things they felt must cease. Hence the Secret Treaty, which engaged both nations to act together against England in the trade-disputes then going on with Spain. Hence the audacity with which the Spaniards took the law into their own hands; hence the impossibility of establishing a *modus vivendi* in a case which was becoming more and more complicated.

But before we trace this quarrel up to the war of 1739, it is necessary to observe the aggravation of the case afforded at this very time by the success of Cardinal Fleury in outwitting the British Government. The death of Augustus II. of Poland in 1733 began afresh, but happily on a small scale, the European struggle, which had practically slept for twenty years. The French set up one candidate for the vacant throne; the Emperor, Charles VI., another. France, Spain, and Sardinia, in close alliance, were victorious both in the
1735. field and in the Cabinet. By the Treaty of Vienna in 1735, France gained the reversion of Lorraine, which soon afterwards fell in, by way of exchange for Tuscany which Spain gave up to Austria, receiving in return the Austrian kingdom of Naples and Sicily for Charles, the Spanish king's son by his second marriage. Thus the Bourbons dominated both the Spanish and Italian peninsulas, and the head of the House in France established a secure outwork on her eastern frontier. Pacific England looked on, stolid and unconcerned, while all she had fought for was carried off. An acute old statesman in his ninth decade had at a trifling expense raised France higher than Louis XIV. had done at the price of untold blood and treasure, accompanied by present and prospective ruin. It was the first war, says Voltaire, which ended with a solid advantage to France since the days of Charlemagne. On this firm base France founded her rivalry with Great Britain, her life-and death struggle for the dominion of the sea and a colonial empire.

The plain truth is that, honourable and wise as Walpole's peace-policy had been at first, it had been carried much too far.

In his dread of the Jacobites, he had allowed himself to be bullied and outwitted. A parliamentary struggle began, which drove him at last from power; for his enemies represented the people of England, whose instincts told them that he could not be trusted with either its honour or its safety. They interpreted only too well the outrageous conduct which Spain, emboldened by impunity, exhibited in the matter of the West Indian trade.

It is sometimes supposed that Spain had a treaty-right to search British vessels on the "high seas" of the Mexican Gulf. She had nothing of the kind. Neither public nor private law was in her favour. Further, when the charge of smuggling is admitted against the British and their colonists, —and these last were chiefly concerned,—it is almost always forgotten that the connivance of Spain and the Spanish colonists had caused smuggling to become an established and systematic proceeding for the greater part of the seventeenth century. It was not till a French prince mounted the Spanish throne in 1700 that any change took place, nor scarcely even then till the Peace of Utrecht. Whether the British Government, after her colonists had enjoyed a practical free trade for three generations, could have worked the Assiento on strict lines may be questioned, but it was not its business to stop smuggling on shore. If Spain had stopped it by the recognised methods, affairs might have taken a different turn. This no doubt was far from an easy or simple matter. The line of coast was long, the expense of a proper naval coast-guard considerable, the great value of the mutual exchange to both parties suggestive of every sort of collusion. It was a clear case for concessions on both sides.

Spain, on the contrary, never dreamt of concession, but behaved in the most violent and intolerable manner. Case after case occurred during a series of years, to which Walpole turned a deaf ear, but which gradually drove not only the merchants but the English people wild. Vessels were seized with circumstances of cruelty on the high seas, crews imprisoned in Mexican ports, captains in the vile prisons of Spain. The "story of Jenkins' ear," which has usually been pronounced a fable, has been recently proved to be true. Petitions upon petitions reached Parliament. Their allegations were tried and proved. Spain itself admitted that it

had unlawfully seized property to the value of more than half a million of British money. As time went on, the popular writers of the day began to arouse the nation in prose and verse. But Walpole uniformly declined to act. He touched the national pride to the quick when he asserted in the House that a nation ought sometimes to "pocket affronts," and that he dreaded to bring the French down upon England. Wyndham, Barnard, Onslow, Pulteney, every man of weight in either House, cried shame.[1]

At last the minister was forced to move; but when he moved it was in such a way as to encourage Spain still more. Matters grew worse and worse. Of course, holding such views, he was bound to resign. But instead of so doing, he took the mean course of acknowledging all he had hitherto denied; and he himself, as Prime Minister, plunged
1739. into the war. This was in 1739. He now became the mere agent for the Opposition, and clinging to place, forfeited every title to respect. Yet his pensioned and well-drilled supporters kept him afloat for more than two years. By that time he was simply forced to retire, a beaten man, and virtually a disgraced minister. It was a distressing end of a course so brilliantly begun; but it turned out in ways which no one could have expected to be the beginning of a great epoch. Looking back on his career, he might be called the Marlborough of peace. No one but he could have piloted the nation and its new dynasty through the most intricate channels. A generation had grown up in unchecked prosperity, so that the country could apply its full strength to new circumstances, and it had been goaded out of a supine and dangerous condition through the very errors of the man who had previously been its greatest benefactor.

We are then entitled to declare that, so far from the modern British empire being founded in mere "plunder and extreme injustice," the war of 1739 was a just war, a necessary war, a war of self-defence against aggressive Powers determined to win back by tortuous means what

[1] For a detailed account of these proceedings see the opening chapters of 'The Life of Admiral Lord Hawke' (Allen); and for a more general account, 'Imperial England' and the article on "The Rise of the Modern British Empire" in the 'Quarterly Review' for 1879, both by the present writer.

they had fairly lost through the mad ambition of Louis XIV. When the smoke of the second or "Seven Years'" War, which was really a continuation of the first, and equally forced upon Great Britain, had cleared away, she was found to be securely seated in India and America, and the flags of the aggressors swept off the seas. Again the scene changes. The Revolt of the American Colonies in 1776 once more brings France, Spain, and nearly all the rest of Europe, to demand the surrender of the empire which had thus been acquired; but with much the same result — except that it was divided between two bodies of Britons. The greatest war of all, arising out of the French Revolution, and rendered terrible by the ambition of Napoleon, only extended the British empire, and settled the world in much the same condition as we find it now. It is impossible, therefore, to exaggerate the importance of marking the true character of the events out of which these mighty issues have been evolved.

We cannot close the Walpolian era without drawing attention once more to the success of the great minister's finance, and on the other hand to the evil effect of his influence upon society. So firmly did he establish the national credit that the public creditors began to contend who should be last paid; and as that feature became normal, and has exercised a more powerful influence ever since than perhaps anything else on the prosperity of the country, the debt of gratitude due to Walpole must never be forgotten. It was he, also, who applied his good sense to the extinction of the Sinking Fund in 1736, after twenty years of a useless existence. Its subsequent history may be summed up here. Fifty years later it was revived by Pitt, who did not see, as Walpole did, that the debt could never be paid off by anything but a *bonâ fide* excess of revenue over expenditure; but it was not established on any permanent principle. In 1819 a real Sinking Fund was at last formed, but its safeguards were soon broken down, and it only lasted ten years. The National Debt has, however, long passed safe limits, and efficient methods of reducing it have in recent times been accepted by all parties. We also connect Walpole with the Excise, which has proved a most valuable form of taxation; but he had to yield for the moment to mob violence. He thought him-

self a too necessary Prime Minister—perhaps in 1733 he was—to resign, and then attempt to carry his great financial measure at some later date by constitutional methods.

In matters of morals and religion the influence of an immoral head of the Government, with such immense power, was of course bad; but too much has been attributed to one person. He represented some respectable convictions, which accompanied the reaction from the over-excited Churchmanship of Queen Anne's reign. That had carried with it an unreal relation between religion and politics, and a virulent spirit of controversy. Lassitude was a natural consequence; and it fell in with the prevailing desire for political quiescence and commercial energy. All this favoured the growth of a spirit of philosophical criticism which undermined the foundation of supernatural religion. Life was sinking into mere animalism. The upper classes set a bad example, and the lower were brutal. Enthusiasm was superciliously discouraged. All preferment, patronage, court influence, and, we might say, all literature, were tending to its extirpation.

The ennobling change which distinguished the middle of the century cannot be accounted for only by the religious revival effected by Wesley, Whitfield, and their followers. The way had been prepared for them not only by the comparatively silent influence of the great works of Law, Lardner, and Bishop Butler, but by the grand political uprising of the whole nation. The absorbing interest of the honourable struggle against the degradations which were associated with Walpole's prolonged tenure of power, the spirit of self-sacrifice engendered by the wars, the noble spectacle of Chatham's rise to greatness, and, we must add, the influence of Lord Bolingbroke, dragged men out of the lower condition into which they had fallen, and the nation threw off the abnormal and ill-fitting garment in which the true proportions of its social life had been lost.

It is one of the most remarkable things in history that it was the genius of Bolingbroke, himself an unbeliever, which proved to be one of the chief means by which the English discovered that the sceptical spirit of the Walpolian era was abnormal. Excluded from every avenue to power by his ancient rival, he devoted himself to the task of proving by his writings—perhaps the most brilliant in our language—

that the disgraceful state of politics, morals, and religion was really due to the circumstances of the disputed Succession. The Tories, the party of the Church, were unemployed on account of the prevalence of Jacobitism in their ranks. It was time to throw it off, to recur to the old English principles of party government and to the foundation of morals, to deliver the king from slavery to a particular party, and loyally help him to become a patriot king, a leader of the nation inseparable from his subjects, and absolutely repudiating Divine Right. The Constitution was not only to be defended when attacked, but as soon as ever a breach was made by which it might be attacked. His 'Letters on History' showed, in the same spirit, how far it was necessary to go back in order to discover the roots of the present evils. Thus broadly laid and powerfully built, he provided a structure which sheltered the distracted reformers of his day. His revenge came too late to give him the power for which he panted; but posterity has reaped the benefit.

CHAPTER VI.

GEORGE II.—PART II.

THE two expeditions with which Walpole commenced the war had been well planned. That of Vernon took Portobello with ease, but failed at Cartagena. That of Anson, in spite of a general breakdown of the equipment, owing to the long peace, ended in the ever-famous voyage of the Centurion. In 1740, at the death of the Emperor Charles VI., all Europe was dragged into war by the refusal of several States to confirm the "Pragmatic Sanction"; and, what was worse, they adopted this policy although they had themselves, under the influence of great bribes, engaged by that instrument to recognise the Succession to the Empire of Charles's daughter, Maria Theresa, Queen of Hungary and Grand-Duchess of Tuscany. The first blow was struck by Frederick II. of Prussia, who seized Silesia. On the French also declaring

war, the Empress threw herself upon Hungary. We know the memorable historic scene,—"We will die for our king, Maria Theresa,"—a constitutional "king." It was then that Hungary became practically an independent nation.

We must pass by the shifting phases of this war, in which the British found themselves fighting for the public law of Europe under obligations imposed by the possession of Hanover. For a moment the chivalry of the cause overpowered the rooted dislike of Hanover entertained by the people; but their kings soon seemed to the British to think of nothing else, and their taxes appeared to be wasted for its benefit. Yet it was Hanover which, in connection with Holland, had enabled George I. to keep the peace of Europe, and Chatham long afterwards declared that he conquered America in Germany, of which Hanover was the British fulcrum. Ministers rose to popularity by denouncing Hanover, but when they came to power they discovered its use. The secret lay in the necessity to the British of the Imperial alliance against France and Spain, which, united in the manner we have seen, were the deadly foes of the ever-growing British commerce.

The death of Fleury in 1743 was the signal for Louis XV. to plunge into the war with Great Britain which Walpole had been weak enough to dread, and he did so without any declaration of war. Cardinal Tencin had become his chief minister, a friend of the Pretender; and as the other nations soon retired from active operations, it became a duel between France and Spain on the one side, Great Britain on the other. The first conflict was at Dettingen, on the Maine, in
1743. 1743. It is difficult to say which army made the greatest mistakes; but George II.—who showed here that his military tastes were no mere vapouring—turned the error of Lord Stair, his general, into a glorious victory by gallantly leading in person a determined charge which won the day. As he had to retreat from want of supplies, the battle does not rank so high as it deserves.

The next conflict was at sea, in the succeeding year, when Admiral Mathews' partial victory off Toulon over the united French and Spaniards was ruined by Lestock, the second in command. It was, however, of the greatest service to England, as it displayed the feeble condition of the navy after the long peace, and at the same time pointed out the officer who

should be employed in its regeneration. This was Captain Hawke, hitherto unknown, though far from inexperienced. Three years later he commanded a squadron which, by its victory off Ushant, convinced the French that it was time to make peace.

It was the events of the year 1745 which really brought home to the English nation the serious character of the war. It was the year of the last Scottish Rebellion, and of the young Pretender's invasion of England. Tencin's plan was amongst the best of its kind. The battle off Toulon was a part of it. The whole strength of the English navy was to be employed in the Mediterranean, while the island was to be attacked by land and sea. Marshal Saxe, the best general in Europe, had a fine army ready to embark from Flanders, Admiral de Roquefeuil a fine fleet ready to cover it. Charles Edward was to raise in their support Scotland and the English Jacobites. The whole of the scheme failed. A storm dispersed the fleet and the transports, destroying many; Saxe never crossed; the Pretender's romantic expedition, which is finely described by Lord Stanhope, caused some alarm on "Black Friday," but, like Mathews' battle, it did good, for it issued in the final settlement of Scotland. 1745.

After the battle of Culloden in the succeeding year the differences which still remained between the two countries were more fully dealt with, and, a little later, Chatham's genius in raising Highland regiments under Highland officers completed the work. The danger to which England had been exposed had another excellent effect. The nation was forced, in spite of itself, to relinquish its prejudice against a standing army, and the Militia delivered it at last from the disgrace of hiring on occasion foreign troops for its protection. It had taken a century to erase the effect of Cromwell's military government. These things, added to the loyalty of Ireland under Lord Chesterfield's brilliant administration in 1745, put an end for ever to the terror of Jacobitism.

The difficulties which had hitherto hampered the policy of England were thus in the process of disappearance during the war, but it was the renewed spirit and conduct of the Royal Navy which decided the contest. It was its appropriate work, for this was a war for ships, colonies, and commerce. The country was fortunate in having at hand the men to

form afresh its naval force, and the good sense at head-quarters to make use of them. Anson's experience and capacity reorganised the naval service: in Hawke was found the man who was to be the forerunner of Nelson. Their business was to break up the communications between France and her American colonies.

The time had come when the English colonies in America, which since Elizabeth's reign had been making sure and steady progress, and to which the Peace of Utrecht had added Newfoundland and Acadie, or Nova Scotia, were threatening to overpower the French Canada. It was felt by the French that it must be strengthened by some new and daring policy, which could alone be made effective by the help of the mother country. The key to the St Lawrence was the French island of Cape Breton, with its strongly fortified capital, Louisburg; but how were the English colonies which fringed the long coast of America to be crippled? That was the question. For this purpose, under cover of the Walpolian peace and the Secret Treaty with Spain, the Mississippi and Ohio were utilised by the French, and a skilful plan matured for confining the English behind the Alleghany Mountains by a series of forts; while on the north the English in Nova Scotia were also to be confined to the seaboard by forts in their rear. The basin of the St Lawrence, with its strong fortress of Quebec in the centre, was also strengthened by a chain of posts. As the English colonists in North America were more than twelve times as numerous as the French, the able governors employed by France proposed to redress the balance by organising the native Indians; and large bodies of troops from France were sent over in frequent detachments to form the nucleus of a great force, and so to build up a strongly fortified Franco-American empire.

Unfortunately for this well-laid plan it could not but be of an aggressive and open nature, and thus the English colonists were engaged in perpetual remonstrances which led to a continuous petty warfare, and convinced the British Government that it was a matter of first-rate importance. Thus, under Anson's skilful management, British squadrons were now actively employed in stopping the French transport of troops; he himself, at the head of a fleet, broke up

one convoy, and Hawke in 1747 fought a very fine action which destroyed another. The French have seldom fought better than on this last occasion. Their cruisers were at the same time preying upon British merchandise, but at the end of the war their losses were twice as great as those of their enemy. In short, the French soon discovered that time was required to ripen their American policy, and that they must stop the war in order to pass their troops across the Atlantic. Much the same reasons applied to their attempt to check the progress of the English in India, which had been hitherto almost solely commercial. Dupleix conceived a different idea, the idea of an Indian military empire, based upon the subjugation of native States; and his remarkable success seriously threatened the East India Company. With the basis of the Isle de France and the Isle de Bourbon, and of the settlements along the Madras coast, his countrymen were to build up a French India which was to match the French America. Time also was here required. 1747.

The English were only too ready to come to terms. The Government was quite unable to sustain a prolonged conflict. Mr Pelham, who, after a short interval, had succeeded Walpole, was a weak minister, and his elder brother, the Duke of Newcastle, who held high place, was the last man to inspire confidence. Nothing could induce the king to employ Pitt in any but a subordinate office; and Marshal Saxe, having won the battle of Fontenoy from the Duke of Cumberland, having conquered the Netherlands, and forced the Allies to make terms, appeared at the time invincible. Hence the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle by which the *status quo*, a mere truce, was accepted, and this involved conditions by no means honourable to Great Britain. Amongst other things Cape Breton, which had been recently conquered, had to be given up. There was nothing as yet which looked like the foundation of a British empire. The war would yet have to be fought out. 1748.

The Eight Years' "Peace" which followed was not a peace either in America or India. The English settlers of the former differed essentially from the usual type of European colonists. They had, impelled by various motives, made a wholesale migration from England to lands scarcely at all occupied by the natives, just like the Australians and Cape 1748–1756.

Colonists of later times, and had combined very happily all the English characteristics. They were an agricultural, a nautical, a municipal people. They brought with them their family life, their religious life, and, it must be added, their English hostility to the French, which made it quite appropriate that they should take up arms against the French intruders. In this, just as the French colonists looked to France, they naturally reckoned upon the aid of their mother country. Great Britain had opened up the West Indian and Spanish American trade for them by force of arms. Would she stand by and see them extirpated by French soldiers and French-drilled Indians? They felt this more when their local expeditions failed, as they for the most part did. They were scattered over a vast extent of territory. They had owed to the old country the blessing of government and protection during their early career, of fixed boundaries, and a common link with the Crown. Their loyalty was vivid, their interests identical.

The sentiments of the colonists were echoed in England, and on both sides of the Atlantic the constant transit of French troops, money, and stores was regarded with increasing dismay. In India, the sudden appearance of a hero made the prospect less alarming. Very soon after the Peace was concluded Clive turned the scale against Dupleix, and using against him his own device of employing native soldiers, drove him out of India. The struggle had however only just begun, and the full strength of Great Britain was seen to be as much required for India as for America. In the West Indies and in Africa, which were just beginning to open up fresh markets for English commerce, the French were hard at work during the Peace in adding to their colonies, generally by the simple process of setting up posts and making proclamations, quite regardless of supposed British interests. In short, with men like Dupleix and Lally in the East, and Jonquière and Galissonière in the West, the three-headed Bourbon league seemed at one time about to emerge supreme in all the three continents.

Again, as in Walpole's day, the people grew furious; and now clamoured for Pitt, who had made himself obnoxious to both king and ministers, and was waiting his time. The half-measures of sending over to America a small force under

Braddock which was destroyed in an ambuscade, and a fleet under Boscawen which took two French ships, and another, under Hawke, to the Channel, where he seized French merchant-ships,—all without a Declaration of War,—served only to exasperate the French. They on their side acted with more sagacity; for they prepared a secret expedition which quietly deprived the English of their cherished possession, Minorca, before anything certain was known of its destination.

The only member of this incapable Government who knew what to do was the king himself. Alarmed for Hanover from the junction of France, Spain, and Austria, he conquered his repugnance to his nephew Frederick of Prussia, and made that close alliance which was to carry such important consequences. Newcastle, many weeks too late, now sent out Byng to protect Minorca. We know the result. The incompetent officer of an incompetent ministry was shot "*pour encourager les autres.*" Pitt was called to the helm, and after a short retirement from office in connection with the affair of Byng, came in, one may say, without conditions, on the shoulders of the people. George, discovering that Pitt had found out how the Hanover he had so often abused was likely to be useful in the coming war, threw aside his scruples and worked with him cordially. For once in English history, king, ministers, and people were united at a most critical moment, and more had been already accomplished than they themselves were aware of to render their united efforts effective. The forces of the three kingdoms were available, the Militia and the Navy were efficient, the colonies and the India merchants were ready to second any reasonable efforts in their favour, and, above all, the nation, purged of Jacobitism, had learnt to rally round the brave old king and his son, the Duke of Cumberland, who, with Pitt to guide them, were a tower of strength. Thus in 1756 opened the Seven Years' War. 1756.

Pitt at once formed his plan. We may compare it to the disposition of an army, with front, rear, and flanks, facing France. His own sea-front and his rear being safe, thanks to the Navy and the Union with Scotland, he could afford to keep the French employed by a series of feints upon their coasts, and by assisting Frederick with troops and subsidies

on the left flank, while the real attack was to be made on the right, in North America. The French were to be cut off from their colonies in those regions, once for all. India was a field of its own, for which provision was made with less difficulty, so long as France was fully employed. It took four years to work out this plan,—in other words, to found the empire.

CHAPTER VII.

THE FOUNDING OF THE MODERN BRITISH EMPIRE UNDER GEORGE II.

It was not till the year 1757 was too far advanced for expeditions against the coast of France that Pitt found it possible to commence operations. His first idea was to surprise and destroy Rochefort, one of the two great western arsenals from which reinforcements were sent off to Canada. Success depended on two things—its being an absolute surprise, and on the complete concord of the naval and military commanders. Neither condition was fulfilled, and the expedition failed. On this first trial of his skill, the great minister committed several errors. He had not allowed time enough for preparing so great a force, he employed an incompetent general in Mordaunt, and he attempted to remedy these faults by expressly insisting on Councils of War, which, as usual, failed. There was no fault on the part of the admirals, of whom Hawke was chief; but a series of military blunders led to a series of public inquiries, a flood of pamphlets, and the loss of a million of money. No minister but Pitt could have survived such a failure, coming as it did after the loss of Minorca. Nor did misfortunes come singly. The gallant Duke of Cumberland had been completely outgeneralled by the French, and forced to sign the humiliating Convention of Closter-seven (or Stade); the attack on Louisburg had failed, and Frederick, the one only ally of the English, after winning two battles, had been completely beaten, and threatened to poison himself. The terrible catastrophe

of the Black Hole of Calcutta was not yet known to have been avenged. Scarcely ever did a deeper gloom overspread England. 1757.

On the other hand, there was a latent spirit of hope, and it was soon justified. There was a full belief in Pitt's genius. Some hoped and thought that the worst had passed. They were right. Before the end of the year the news of Clive's great battle of Plassey announced that the English were not only avenged, but had commenced the rule of the Company over a great part of North India. Before the new year commenced, the indomitable Frederick had won the great battles of Rosbach and Lissa. The fame of his genius and valour passed through the nation like an electric shock. The British courage rose high. The king and Pitt placed the English and Hanoverian troops under Frederick's best officer, Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick. Parliament voted vast subsidies to the Prussian hero, for they felt that now was the time when money must be spent with no niggard hand. Never was it put to a better use. Above all, the selection of Ferdinand showed that Pitt had learnt his lesson in the choice of officers; and the years 1758 and 1759 witnessed a gradual, though not unchequered, march to final victory. Finding that royal princes and senior officers were unequal to the crisis, Pitt selected Amherst and Wolfe from among the junior generals for the expedition against Louisburg, and placed Boscawen, an admiral only second to Hawke, in command of the attacking fleet. The success of this well-planned expedition was complete. We saw that the island of Cape Breton had been restored to the French, and it had been strengthened in every way. It was a harbour for their war-fleets, a centre for their great fisheries, a nest of pirates. The strategy of both nations had pivoted upon its possession. Having now, however, fallen into the hands of the British, it became a direct stepping-stone to Canada; for Wolfe himself suggested to Pitt how it might be used for that purpose. Already in 1758 some of the French-American forts were captured.

Pitt's operations on the French coast answered their purpose in detaining French troops from the frontier, and by the close blockade of the great ports they were prevented from sending succours both to the East and West. Hawke 1758.

drove the French squadron in Basque Roads up the river Charente, whence they could not get to sea; St Malo and Cherbourg were burnt; but, on the other hand, the loss of the English rearguard at St Cas was a serious disaster. However, the events of 1758 were on the whole encouraging, and there was a presentiment that great things were about to be done.

1759. The year 1759 exceeded all expectations. It was indeed, like 1706, an *annus mirabilis*. All Pitt's plans now bore fruit. Nearly every month brought news of a victory. In January, Keppel destroyed the French position on the West Coast of Africa by the capture of Goree. In June, the island of Guadaloupe, the centre of the French position in the West Indies, fell. In August, Prince Ferdinand and the English troops won the battle of Minden, which would have been a still more crushing defeat of the French if Lord Sackville had obeyed orders. In September, Boscawen, at Lagos, on the coast of Portugal, caught the fugitive French squadron which had escaped from Toulon, and disposed of it while on its way to join the Brest fleet. In October, Wolfe won the famous victory of Quebec, and with it the whole of Canada, which carried with it in its turn North America for the English. In November was won the crowning victory of all, Hawke's battle of Quiberon, in which the twenty-one line-of-battle ships commanded by the Admiral-Marshal Conflans were destroyed, either in battle or by being forced to take refuge in creeks and rivers, whence they could not make their escape. Only a few did so after a considerable interval of time.

This battle differs from all others in history in the circumstance that the victors pursued their enemy into their anchorage in the midst of rocks and shoals, on a dark November evening, while a heavy gale of wind was blowing upon a lee shore. No finer achievement ever took place at sea, and its effects were not disproportioned. It broke up not only the French navy, but also the army which had been collected on the coast of Brittany to invade England; and it had such an effect on the financial system of France that its public credit collapsed. To conclude the record of victory, India sent its quota in the news of the battle of Wandewash, where Coote taught the natives who had not yet made up their minds

which side it would be most safe to follow. India, like America, lay at the feet of Great Britain.

Thus closed the reign of George II., who lived to see, at the age of seventy-seven, the British empire founded in East and West, his beloved Hanover saved from the fate which seemed to await it, and the civil, naval, and military administration of England taking a shape such as he had honestly striven to give it. Though the result was chiefly due to Pitt, the greatest minister England has ever had, it was not a little due to the king himself. On the other hand, the failure of the French was not a little due to the demerits of Louis XV. The public-spirited George was privately punished for his private faults; but Louis forsook his public duties to pursue his private pleasures, and left his people to be governed by his mistresses and their minions. The brave, business-like, straightforward sovereign of a free people deserved to win the duel. If we take the trouble to read how such a man as Burke regarded this reign, or how even such a writer as Horace Walpole was carried away by the respect and affection the people felt for the king's memory, we shall think the less of the depreciation of his character at the hands of modern satirists. 1760.

But in giving their due to King George and Pitt, to Hawke and Wolfe, to Clive and Boscawen, we must not for a moment lose sight of the change which had taken place in the people of the British Islands themselves. The training of various kinds which they had been undergoing during the two wars and the intervening peace had raised them head and shoulders above their stunted growth in the earlier time. Activity of every sort had succeeded to a state of sordid stagnation. We have hinted at the part played by Bolingbroke's writings, Pulteney's eloquence, and Pitt's splendid sincerity of character. Public spirit became contagious. Ignoble ease appeared shameful. The debates in Parliament made their way by as yet unauthorised reports, none the less greedily devoured. Pope, Goldsmith, and Dr Johnson passed on the blazing torch of a noble literature. Blackstone interpreted in imperishable language the law of their forefathers to generations which had forgotten the foundations on which they were laid. We have seen how Law, Butler, and Wesley, with the Bible in their

hands and hearts, had elevated the spiritual side of human nature for multitudes of all classes. Shakespeare and Milton were dragged forth from their temporary obscurity, and once more formed the minds of rising youth. Society began to look for culture in women as well as men. Philanthropy was at work in searching out the dark places of a still half-barbarous social life. The mother of nations was herself preparing for the duty assigned her of moulding her foster-children in the eastern and western hemispheres. Her ancient free constitution lay at the root of this sudden bound to imperial grandeur. As Voltaire said at this very time, she was always found to be "fertile in extraordinary characters." In other words, her people were never long at a loss for representative men round whom they might rally.

It is also right to regard this sudden rise to empire not so much as a new and unexpected event as the natural sequel of a past history, and in some respects a mere expansion of an old position which had been for a time in abeyance. Though never before Mistress of the Seas in the sense which the victories of Hawke and Rodney, Howe and Nelson made familiar, England had often in the Middle Ages, and even later, asserted, as we have seen, her maritime superiority. The Cinque Ports and Yarmouth fisheries, the trade with Flanders and Aquitaine, the Tudor encouragement of enterprise, nourished a far larger proportion of her inhabitants in the ways of nautical life than could be found elsewhere. Her seamen proved their superiority in war because they were a spontaneous nautical product, not the mere drilled equipage of a Royal Navy which was the creation of kings. Her geographical situation did, indeed, throw her behind Spain and Portugal in the race of discovery; but it soon became apparent that the crews of the Spanish Armada were but children at the sea war-game; and when her only rivals, the Dutch, after their single century of nautical greatness, succumbed, her claim was practically unchallenged, just as it had been for the most part in past centuries over a smaller area.

The death of George II. in 1760, so soon followed by the resignation of Pitt, makes a distinct break in the war. Thus though we may seem to have summed up its successes

and the causes of victory somewhat prematurely, it is not really so. The empire was practically founded already; but we cannot technically speak of it as such till the Peace of Paris was concluded in 1763. On the other hand, the marked character of the young George III., his position, and his advisers, began to tell on the state of affairs at once. Events of no small importance occurred. Spain joined the war, and was almost immediately crushed; Belleisle was taken from France, but the policy of making peace without looking for further extension of the empire commenced with the reign.

That was not the policy of Pitt. He had received early information of the new Family Compact between France and Spain—desperate France and long-irritated Spain—and had laid his plans with consummate sagacity against Belleisle, Cuba, and the Manillas. By a sudden Declaration of War he would have seized the galleons for which alone he knew Spain to be waiting before she declared herself. Unable to persuade the Cabinet, he retired. The animus of Spain had, indeed, been visible enough long before, but now the accession of a new king, who exchanged his throne of the Two Sicilies for that of Spain, in 1759, under the name of Charles III., and who, in spite of the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, had placed his own son Ferdinand at Naples as his successor, had at last enabled the French Court to array the three Bourbon kingdoms in that strict alliance against Great Britain at which they had been aiming through the whole of the century. Instead, then, of embracing the French offer of a peace on the terms of *uti possidetis*, which would have been extremely favourable to his country, Pitt was bent on using the opportunity of carrying off the whole of the Spanish and French colonies; and he succeeded in securing Belleisle, which was very useful at the Peace as a means of obtaining Minorca in exchange. The brilliant success of Albemarle and Pocock in the capture of Havana, of Rodney and Monckton at Martinique, and other West Indian islands, and of Draper and Cornish at Manilla, were likewise a tribute to his administration, though they did not occur till 1762, when he had resigned. And he had just grounds for supporting Frederick, who, though Russia had joined France and Austria, supported himself with triumphant vigour against them all. 1762.

To the young George III., to the Tories, represented by his chosen minister, Lord Bute, to a large proportion of the Whigs whose light had been politically extinguished by the blaze of Pitt's renown, and to an increasing majority of the people who thought the war had cost quite enough, the outlook was different. It could not be denied that Pitt's calculations were reasonable. Such fleets and armies and heroic officers might never be got together again. What a waste of resources was involved in breaking up the machine just when it was completing its work! How disgraceful to desert the dauntless ally whose spirit had infused itself into the fainting hearts of the islanders! And yet were those islanders prepared to absorb anything more than they had already gained when the old king died? Was not the great war-minister carried away by the excitement of success beyond the limits of a cool judgment? Was it wise to reduce rival Powers to such a point that they should have no outlet for national energy, no choice but to resume the war at the first possible moment? Was not the real value of the late enormous expenditure that it secured the free and undisturbed exercise of British trade and commerce over territories which it would take generations to exhaust? Was there not much for the nation to do which was being postponed by these wars, year after year? Honour had been more than satisfied. Spanish insults, French threats, might now be forgotten. The idea of the required Peace should be, like that of Utrecht, the preservation and defence of the new empire from the incessant attacks to which it had been, and would be, exposed, and to promote the extension of British commerce over the whole world.

Nor as months passed, and triumphs were announced from different quarters, did these arguments become weaker but stronger; while the question of inducing Frederick to act with the British Government gradually assumed less importance. The accession of a friendly sovereign of Russia delivered him from one enemy; and as soon as he and Maria Theresa discovered that they were left alone to fight it out—to scratch out each other's last eye, as Horace Walpole put it—they contrived to come to terms. After all, it had been mainly through British help—her millions of money, her fine though not numerous troops, her diplomacy, her efforts

for the sake of Hanover—that he had emerged out of the tremendous conflict in which he had deliberately chosen to involve himself. Was he to be the sole judge of the right moment to stop?

These were the grounds on which the Peace of Paris was formed and defended. Though Havana and Belleisle were restored, Gibraltar and Minorca secured the entrance to the Mediterranean, and continued to prevent the House of Bourbon from using the advantages which the possession of the two peninsulas gave them against the British. The belt of young American colonies had been saved from impending destruction, and had received the accession of Florida and Eastern Louisiana: the grandest prospects lay before the mother country in their expansion. Excluded from the rest of India, Pondichery was not dangerous in French hands, and the West Indian Islands which they retained were surrounded on all sides by British possessions. To sum up: this famous treaty secured all that was really required for the new empire; it treated the Allies honourably; and it set an example of moderation and good sense worthy of the Protector of International Law and the Balance of Power. Nor was it altogether unfitting that the natural elation of the British should be checked by disappointment and disgust at the seemingly feeble issue of so many victories. They might otherwise have forgotten that their success had been due not only to their own prowess and favourable government, but to the unfortunate circumstances of their enemies, whose kings and nobles were still powerful enough to hamper the energies of their gallant people, and spend the substance of their subjects in riotous living. 1763.

CHAPTER VIII.

GEORGE III. (1760–1820).—PART I.

THIS extremely long reign must be dealt with in three divisions, independent of "parts" or chapters. (1) The stormy commencement, which includes the fall of the long-dominant

Whigs, now hopelessly broken up into parties, the administration of the Tory Lord North, the Wilkes struggle, the
1760–1783. Revolt of the Colonies, and the resulting war, ending with the Peace of Versailles in 1783. (2) The brief Whig
1783–1794. interregnum, and the peace-career of the younger Pitt, coinciding with the French Revolution, and ending with the Revolution-
1794–1820. war of 1794. (3) The two great wars which are really one. The last part of the Regency will be taken in the reign of George IV.

In dealing with these times, but especially with the first division, no apology is necessary for claiming to follow the course of events by the help of the contemporary writers, of whom the chief is the king himself, rather than the commentaries of most of our recent historians, who have judged the reign from a point of view much coloured by modern politics. The changes of opinion which have taken place regarding such cardinal questions as the French Revolution, the righteousness of the British wars, the characters of Napoléon and of William Pitt, may warn us that independence of judgment is still required when we come to consider the character of George III., of the education he received, and of the difficulties which beset his early career as king.

Let it not appear too trite a truism to remark that the Government of Great Britain has been for many ages—one might say from the very settlement of the race, if we make allowance for the unscientific form of early institutions—a government by King, Lords, and Commons. By the friction of the three parts with one another, each part of the machine gradually wore itself smooth enough for practical work. Each was protected from the overbearing pressure of its coadjutors by a series of checks and vetoes which time made sacred. We have watched the process, and observed how the restored Constitution, which worked fairly well under William, Mary, and Anne, had suffered from the disputed Succession. That circumstance had necessarily depressed the Crown, and placed the government in the hands of the "Revolution Families," a Whig oligarchy. For half a century George I. and George II. only kept their throne by yielding to what they themselves admitted to be a necessity of domestic politics, and by exhibiting a remarkable patience, courage, and good sense in their dealings with foreign affairs.

Chatham (as he was soon to be styled) was a most exceptional minister, but even he was powerless to rule apart from the "Whig connection." His very greatness and success had, however, brought the vice of the system to a point. He had become a despot. This was far better than the rule of a Walpole, a Pelham, or a Newcastle, but it was not the Constitution, and it exposed the nation to the greatest disasters.

We ought then to admit that the resolution with which the young king started to recover for the Crown its constitutional position was good in itself, appropriate to the first of the House who was "born and bred a Briton," and, as we have seen, specially needed in its assertion at this very time in order to control a too powerful minister. The Earl of Bute, a favourite at his mother's court,—quite falsely supposed to be something more,—was the only instrument ready to the king's hands. It was far from a perfect instrument, but it answered its purpose in assisting the king to disengage himself from a power superior to his own, and to bring about the Peace of Paris. Let us appraise all the gossip on this subject at its true value.

When we inquire how it was that the young king, the son of the contemptible Frederick, had come on the stage prepared all at once to play so important a part in English history, we observe how fortunate it was that the father died while the son was quite young, that the mother was an eminently sensible and religious woman, that their court had been the resort of great men, and that the future king, though far from studious, was particularly receptive and observant. Bolingbroke's death had also occurred at a fortunate period for him. The political works of that great writer were the handbook of his rising youth, and much more useful than personal intercourse would have been. Blackstone, who declined the royal tutorship, was directed to transmit his famous "Commentaries" to court as soon as each lecture had been delivered. Murray, afterwards the great Lord Mansfield, was the prince's "preceptor"; Bishop Thomas, a model of virtue, gained his warmest affections. His character thus became early impressed with the ideas which his long reign enabled him to put in practice. It turned out to be a virtuous character which taught him to pro

mote virtue and discourage vice, a simple, self-contained, firm, manly character, worthy of a great office at a great period. What was called his obstinacy might generally, if not always, be expressed by a better word. It is only ignorance which treats him as dull or illiterate, perverting some of his rapid *obiter dicta*, or dwelling on malicious party-caricatures. It was not merely his good-humoured address or his homely style which made him the idol of his people to an extent unparalleled, but his public spirit, in which he outshone even his two predecessors, his undaunted bearing, his sufferings for the public good, his private griefs, his love and sympathy for the poor.

Let us now watch his conduct,—and of course he had much to learn,—in relation to the ministries for which Pitt's resignation made way. Over the vacant place now began the fierce quarrels of the members of that shattered Whig oligarchy which Pitt had subdued. Bute wisely resigned after a very short tenure of office, feeling himself unpopular and unfitted, in spite of a good judgment and many accomplishments, to hold his place in Parliament. He left the king powerless and almost alone. For a short time he advised him as a friend, an invidious position which both parties soon relinquished, and honourably refused to re-establish. After the Peace George Grenville, at the head of a Whig government, took the helm, for which his obstinate pedantic habits made him quite as incapable as Bute. To him we owe the quarrel both with the American colonies and with Wilkes, the two events which gave so marked a colour to the reign. The first, which we no longer treat as an unmitigated evil, gave the signal for the Irish Rebellion and the French Revolution; the second gave the people some much-needed liberties, which compensated for the disgraceful scenes which accompanied the process. Of course the king must bear his share of blame for the errors of his ministers, but we shall best understand the measure of his responsibilities by observing his efforts to form a party through which he could exercise the influence constitutionally vested in the Crown.

The body of peers and members of the Lower House which he gathered round him for this purpose were called "The King's Friends," and as such have been scornfully desig-

nated "hirelings." Lord Stanhope has disposed of this charge in the main. Many of them were honest Loyalists who supported the king on the highest principles; but there were others who had no doubt received pensions and places by way of inducement. It would, however, be wholly unfair to condemn the system of bribery which obtained in the last century from the point of view of to-day. The aristocratic owners of boroughs bought and sold the representation, as their fathers had done before them, like shop-goods. The corporations of towns had turned the freemen out of their rights that they might divide among themselves the lucrative spoils of corruption. The House of Commons was in ordinary times very little representative of the people. Both Pitts, father and son, wished to make it so, but in vain. The elder Pitt, indeed, only commanded his majorities by means of Newcastle's bribes. Up to 1833 England was, in fact, governed by the nominees of the Crown and of a few rich men, an aristocratic government ruling by force of wealth and place, under monarchical and parliamentary forms.

But this oligarchy was at least superior to the despotism of neighbouring States; and it must be remembered that, though improvement had begun, the people were as yet very little educated. It was George III. himself who gave the great impulse to the education of the poor. At any rate, it was by the help of the "King's Friends," whom he carefully and vigilantly organised, that he emerged, though only gradually, out of the insignificant position in which he at first found himself. That he succeeded at all, without having recourse to a military *coup d'état*, which no Hanoverian sovereign ever thought of, was owing to the fact that the still all-powerful Whigs were now hopelessly divided into four sections following different leaders,—the Grenville Whigs, the Bedford Whigs, the Pitt Whigs, who were rather tending towards the Tories, and the Rockingham Whigs, of whom Burke was the mouthpiece, and who professed to be the only true representatives of the party. Each of these had its day during the first ten factious years of the reign. The petty politics of the factions can hardly be displayed in outlines; how factious they were, and how difficult the king's task, is notorious enough. His disappointments may be illustrated by the circumstance that when he had made up his mind in

1765. 1765 that, the differences about the Peace having passed away, no one but Pitt could govern the country in decent harmony with himself, he found the way absolutely barred by the obstinacy of Lord Temple, Pitt's brother-in-law. And again, when in the next year he had succeeded in placing Pitt in office, it became plain that the great minister's mind had already begun to give way under the temporary pressure of illness, and that he who had once been a despot was a mere drag upon the administration.

It was under this deceptive condition of affairs—the government of a great man who overshadowed the other members without exercising any real power—that Charles Townshend, a mere brilliant orator, without experience or judg-
1767. ment, took the second great step towards the Revolt of the Colonies by taxing American imports. Not that Grenville's first mistake was ever forgotten, though it had been cancelled by the Rockingham Administration, under Pitt's influence, in 1765. It should be observed that these fundamental errors were due to the Whigs. The king had gone so far as to oppose Grenville's violent method of carrying out his policy, and supported its repeal; but it is also right to observe that ideas which afterwards appeared self-evident were of very slow growth at the time. The Americans did not themselves object at first to the taxation of imports, but many influences were at work to strengthen the principles of resistance. Even the violent Junius maintained the right to tax, and Burke declined to deny it. The crisis had, in fact, occurred just when the British Government was in a transition state, at a time when colonial affairs had not yet begun to receive attention, and when the notion of colonial independence had never yet been entertained in Europe, nor even by the colonies themselves. They were looked upon by the English exactly as Ireland was regarded, or any English county. Further, the Seven Years' War, waged at such an enormous cost, for the preservation of these very colonies from enemies who seemed at the point of grasping their prize, had presented them to the mother country in a light of kinship and unity which had never been felt before. Thus their new attitude seemed to be one of the grossest ingratitude, a political breach of the Fifth Commandment. A wise and settled Government might possibly have treated the

symptoms of impatience and discontent with magnanimity; but as this could not be expected under the circumstances, and as the whole British nation backed up the policy of resistance, as even Lord Chatham died in the very act of beseeching his countrymen never to give way to American Independence, it is best to rank the war and the separation amongst those events which were predestined with a view to vast issues beyond the forecast of men, and to be sparing in denunciations of those who, we may think, ought to have been more sagacious than they were.

By the time the Whigs had for ten years misgoverned the country, Grafton's leadership, the worst of all, had been thoroughly discredited, while the attacks of Junius and the demagogy of Wilkes had nearly made all government impossible. The Tories, however, were now, under the circumstances of desperate disunion among their opponents, strong enough to take the lead, and the king had so far surmounted 1770.
his difficulties; but the inheritance of trouble which fell to Lord North from his predecessors would have crushed even a stronger man than the witty, good-tempered minister who was the first leader of the Tory party after an interval of two generations. For a time there was no great change in the composition of the Government; but as it became more and more plain that the king was the real Prime Minister, his "Friends" came gradually to be seated in the chief places, while an Opposition, formidable by great names, but disunited, was unable to control the course of affairs. The struggle with Wilkes reached its most acute stage in the first years of the North ministry, and it may be well to sum up here the results in favour of liberty and progress produced by that arch-demagogue's victory. There were no fewer than four of them. (1) General warrants against accused persons, without naming them, which, during the prevalence of Jacobitism may have been a necessary evil, were abolished. (2) The freedom of the press grew directly out of the struggle. (3) So also did the open reporting of parliamentary debates, hitherto made known in private and irresponsible ways; and (4) the privileges of Parliament were placed at last on a secure footing, after a struggle of centuries. Until these reforms had taken place there could be no reform in the representation of the people, nor any limit set to the corrupt systems of

government which the course of events, rather than any deliberate preference for evil-doing, had introduced. There could hardly be imagined a worse instrument for bringing about a good work than the vicious Wilkes.

Before North came into power the taxation question had excited to no small degree a section of the New Englanders, but when the Government had given way on the general question, it was he who, for the benefit of the East India Company, determined to retain a trifling tax on its tea
1773 imported into the colonies. It was supposed to be a matter of no consequence, but it brought on an armed conflict. The resistance however died down; nor was there any serious disturbance of what now assumed the appearance of a strong and successful government for two or three years. The renewed resistance of Boston in 1773 brought on the crisis which, under the national feeling already described, was too sharp for conciliatory measures. Large majorities in both Houses overwhelmed the remonstrances of Chatham and Burke, who were soon joined by Fox; and the war com-
1775. menced in 1775.

Of course we can only here interpret the course of events, leaving the details, about which there is now but little dispute, to be studied in books like Lord Stanhope's 'History of England.' There was much in this war of brothers to distress the moralist; but yet it may be said that the two great divisions of the English-speaking race parted in no ignoble strife. We are still free to admire the Roman persistence of the king, representing the mass of the nation in all its classes, as well as the truly English spirit of the colonists. The people who could produce a Franklin, an Adams, a Jefferson, —and above all a Washington, the greatest character of English history which had then appeared since Alfred the Great, —faithfully represented the ancient stock, and it was well for them that their efforts were seconded by the most powerful voices in the old country; while, for once, against them were available as admirals and generals not one of the men of genius who at other times have turned the scale of victory for the "mother of nations."

CHAPTER IX.

GEORGE III.—PART II.

In the light of the nobler ideas which animated the colonists, and the satisfaction we have long learnt to feel at their success, we are apt to forget that their appeal to France and Spain for help against Great Britain was the main cause of the bitterness with which their conduct was regarded. The divisions amongst themselves caused their success to depend on such help; but to the British people the crime of high treason seemed to be added to that of ingratitude. This it was which inflamed the old patriotic spirit of Chatham, who had been at first their advocate; this it was which, while it frightened the mass of those who had at first supported the war but were soon tired out, brought to light the surprising merits of the king himself, who stood alone, deserted even by Lord North, in his resolution to make no peace till France and Spain were reduced once more to the condition which was necessary for the safety of the empire. This is generally called the king's "obstinacy"; let us rather call it the magnificent heroism of the "*vir justus et tenax propositi*." He had been unable to persuade his ministers to adopt what was no doubt the policy most likely to be successful, of employing the whole strength of the British arms against France and Spain, and leaving the colonists to be dealt with afterwards; but at least he could refuse to make peace till some decisive success against those kingdoms had been achieved. The mere statement of dates proves the correctness of his judgment. In June 1781 he publicly declared he would not stoop to a dishonourable peace; on the 12th of April 1782 Rodney won his great victory over 1782.
the French off Dominica, which may almost be ranked with Hawke's at Quiberon, and Nelson's at the Nile and Trafalgar; in September 1782 Elliott crushed his Spanish assailants off the Rock of Gibraltar; in the course of three months afterwards France and Spain were glad to entertain the idea of peace; in September 1783 the Peace of Versailles was con- 1783.
cluded.

The independence of the United States seemed now, after

these victories over France and Spain, but a small thing compared to the magnitude of the issues which had at first borne such a threatening aspect. Now that the safety and honour of the empire had been triumphantly maintained against a world in arms, the king could afford to salute John Adams with the kinglike remark: "I will be the first to meet the friendship of the United States as an independent Power." After all, his people had suffered no real loss. They obtained a commerce of a hundred millions with free America in place of a barren sovereignty, a fine income instead of a precarious capital. The separation must have come about before long, nor could the struggle with France and Spain have been long delayed. The parting with Minorca was nothing, now that Gibraltar had been proved impregnable; and Florida no longer concerned the mother country. Like those of Utrecht and Paris, the Treaty was moderate and unambitious; Great Britain arose from the war stronger and greater than ever; and by that means obtained eleven years of unspeakable value for the development of her resources before they were subjected to a trial the severity of which threw all the past troubles of the nation into insignificance.

1770–1782. We must regard these twelve years of the North administration, generally accounted so disastrous, from still another point of view. They were a time of transition in the resettlement of political parties. Long excluded from power for their Jacobitism, the Tories had had no practice in administration, and had lost the art. Lord North, seated between the two clever lawyers, Thurlow and Wedderburn, was forced to rely upon their aid alone to meet in debate the greatest orators England had ever seen. A training was by the end of this time supplied, and the effects were soon visible. The Whigs were just as much in want of party-training from the opposite cause, the too-long tenure of power. The petty and personal considerations which actuated them were to be lifted up by a new band of Whigs into a public-spirited policy, for which adversity was the best discipline. This much-needed balance of parties, without which the Constitution becomes a dead letter, was due to the king whom it has been too long the fashion to decry; but it should not be forgotten that his terrible illnesses were the effect of the intense labour and responsibility of the struggle.

The high opinion expressed of him by Franklin on several occasions throughout this trying time is a sufficient answer to the animadversions of popular modern essayists. What could be finer than his behaviour at the Gordon Riots of 1780, when he was the one person in the Government who did not lose his head, the one man who saved society? What finer than his demeanour when over and over again assassins attempted his life? There were of course occasions during this first period of his reign when he shared for a moment the unpopularity of ministers or measures, but none after the Peace. He now reigned in the hearts of his people till the very close of his long harassed life. Harassed it had already begun to be by the bad conduct of certain members of his own family—an hereditary penalty, but one which he at least did not deserve.

If Great Britain was thought to have passed through an evil time, what about France and Spain? The latter country now ceased to be independent. Dragged into every war by her imperious neighbour, she was left a mere wreck, a third-rate Power. France, already crippled under Louis XIV., lost still more by every effort to recover or make for herself a new position; and her long-suffering people, hopelessly despairing, and long past the stage when progressive reforms might have removed the obstructions of centuries, were ripe for the Revolution which acute observers perceived to be imminent. The aid she had given to the American Rebellion for the sake of depressing Great Britain directly and distinctly reacted on herself, and soon affected the whole social and political condition of Europe. Nor in surveying the condition of Great Britain and her neighbours may we forget that while the mother country lost colonies from want of intelligence and sympathy, she learnt a lesson in the art of keeping the rest. It was under the personal government of the king and Lord North that even the Roman Catholics of conquered Canada obtained, in spite of Protestant opposition, freedom of worship, representative institutions, and trial by jury. Thus they not only remained true during the revolt of the States, but set an example of that loyalty which is still the overpowering sentiment of the eleven millions who inhabit the fifty-four colonies of Great Britain. And of course what Canada obtained could be refused to no others. On that

foundation William Pitt and the king built the fabric of Colonial Government which has made them what they are, a part and parcel of the empire.

1783-1794. We begin our SECOND PERIOD of the reign with observing that the three ministries which in turn succeeded that of North in 1782 can only be noticed here as bringing the younger Pitt to the front, the great man who was to prepare his country to withstand the storms she was about to experience, and then to pilot her through tumultuous seas. They were indeed of the greatest use as proclaiming the shattered condition of the party which had once been so necessary and so powerful; and especially in convincing the people that the most brilliant debater yet seen in Parliament, Charles James Fox, was not to be trusted with their political interests. It was he who, feeling his power, but aware that his profligate character prevented his being Premier, damaged Rockingham's short-lived Administration by his quarrel with Shelburne; and when on Rockingham's death Shelburne succeeded him as Premier, Fox practically broke up that Administration also. Then came his Coalition with Lord North, that of men whose principles had been opposed for years, and which naturally shocked not only the king but the nation. Pitt soon found his opportunity. His earliest appearances in the House had convinced people that in the son of Chatham had arisen a ruler of men, and the king urged him to take offices which he was too wise to accept. He measured himself against Fox, and made up his mind that if he took office it should be on an appeal to the people, and as Prime Minister. Within two years from North's

1784. resignation he had achieved that position, perhaps the most rapid rise and the most remarkable political struggle in modern times. It was achieved by the help of the king, who no doubt in the process of breaking up, in conjunction with Lord Temple, the Coalition, stretched the constitutional rights of the Crown. The fairest commentators on that event have, however, admitted that Fox's avowed efforts to reduce those rights to a nullity were quite an equal stretching of the Constitution on his side. At any rate, there is no question that the king represented the nation in this matter, as the appeal to the constituencies most abundantly proved; nor is it easy to see how at that moment any other course

would have settled the question whether George III. or Fox were to be king.

If we still wonder how Pitt, a youth of twenty-four, fresh from college, whom Sheridan taunted as "the Angry Boy," leaped at a bound to the headship of the nation at its greatest parliamentary era, we shall see that, like the case of Walpole, it was by no means a success of chance and circumstances, but the direct result of education, industry, and good sense. In both cases it was like the government of Pericles —the rule of "the first man"; but if we regard the issue, we may surely trace the difference of the two careers to the difference of the moral character of the men. It was Pitt's stern devotion to duty, his self-control, a sincerity like his father's, and the balanced judgment in which he excelled his father,—it was these qualities, even more than his sensible and business-like speeches, which rapidly established the confidence of the nation. The commercial and professional classes led the way, the gentry and the mass of the people followed them. The effect of his oratory in the House was based upon the form of his speeches almost as much as upon their matter. Like his father, and by his father's care, he was from his early youth penetrated with classical literature, but not of a pedantic kind. It had always a practical bearing. It was derived not from the arts of grammar and composition, nearly so much as from careful learning by heart, and from extensive reading. His mathematical training, like his classics, was brought into direct connection with the business of politics, and saved him from empty and inconsequent rhetoric. His accurate knowledge of the best English authors and of the French language, aided by his father's personal training and example, did the rest. When such a training once more falls to the lot of a capable youth, we may hope to witness such another phenomenon.

The battle which decided the fate of Fox was fought upon the question of the condition of India, and as that vast possession was the most abiding gain of the Seven Years' War, such notice as befits these pages can no longer be delayed. On the expulsion of the French, a mere trading Company had become the rulers of many millions of people, and of course many mistakes were made for which England could not evade the responsibility. The corruption and oppression

which were exercised by many of the Company's officers issued in famine and distress. Lord Clive, the chief founder
1765. of the Indian empire, had been sent out in 1765 to organise the administration; but it was not till that born ruler of men,
1772. Warren Hastings, had become Governor General in 1772, and Lord North had, on the part of the Government, regulated the system which had by this time been established by the Company, that British India began to assume a preponderating place amongst the great native powers. But this was evidently an improper position for an uncontrolled Company, and all parties had come to that conclusion by the end of the great war. Warren Hastings's somewhat high-handed proceedings showed that no time was to be lost, and Fox, assisted by Burke, brought in an India Bill, on which he elected to stand or fall. It was on the face of it defective and objectionable. All power was to be transferred from the Company, not to the Crown, but to seven commissioners, members of Parliament, who were named for four years, after which the Crown would appoint. These of course would be Whigs. Under these commissioners was to be a "Council of India," elected by the proprietors of East India Stock. When Pitt became, by an immense majority, Premier, his first business was to bring in his own bill, under which India was governed till the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857 forced the Crown to put an end altogether to the government of the East India Company. It was a fair and judicious balance between Crown government and the Company's management. The former appointed a Board of Control for the civil and military administration; the Company was left free to use its patronage and manage all its internal affairs.

But the best schemes come to nothing unless they are properly started, and Lord Cornwallis was happily selected for this purpose. Under his nine years' administration all the former errors were rectified. Burke and Sheridan, who eloquently and indefatigably conducted the impeachment of Warren Hastings, threw a light into every dark corner of Indian government, and Cornwallis took care it should never be extinguished. His judicial, territorial, social, and administrative settlements have been the basis of all subsequent arrangements. Under him princes and people alike learnt to trust the British, and to feel themselves a part of the

empire; while the European officials were taught by degrees the lesson that justice and probity were to be set at the same standard in India as at home, and the soldiers that discipline was to be no less rigidly exacted. It may indeed be said with truth that it was Cornwallis's own high standard of temperance, industry, and straightforward honesty which gradually elevated and formed that of Indian society.

After settling the pressing affairs of India, Pitt instantly turned to the equally pressing condition of Ireland. The American War had given an opportunity which the Irish were not slow to seize. The system of Protestant Ascendancy and Penal Laws had become obsolete. Lord Chesterfield's improvements had worn themselves out. Jacobitism was no longer in the air, and therefore, no doubt, reform should have been undertaken before it was demanded by an armed people. The selfish restriction forced upon Irish trade by the English merchants should have been abolished before the "Volunteers" had, upon plausible pretences, assumed the direction of affairs. In 1779 they numbered 1779.
50,000, and "Grattan's Parliament" took up the cry of "Free Trade." In the panic born of national distress, North's bills had, indeed, conceded the just demand for commercial equality, but the Coalition Government, by the repeal of Poyning's Act and that of George I., went so far as to surrender absolutely all British legislative and judicial supremacy over Ireland. The Parliament of Ireland—still composed of Protestants alone — now acknowledged no control, and the two islands were virtually separated. A chronic state of rebellion was the consequence, and all that Pitt could do till it broke out in 1798 was to govern the country as well as he could by men such as the Duke of Rutland, on whom he could rely, and to lay his plans for the Union, which was evidently the only alternative to civil war.

He next tried his hand on a Reform Bill for the English Parliament, but failed, as his father had failed before him. Considerably elevated in public spirit though it had been, a Parliament of nominees and placemen could hardly be expected to destroy itself. Reform had to wait for the demand of the people. He was more successful in reforming the abuses which infested the public offices; but his greatest feats were his financial measures. An early and

enthusiastic disciple of Adam Smith, he took free trade as his principle; and we may judge of the extent of his operations on excise, customs, and stamps by the number of resolutions required to arrange and consolidate them. They were no less than 2537. The commercial relations with France were now established afresh on a liberal footing, and the old Methuen Treaty with Portugal abrogated. Claret was no longer to be excluded in favour of port. The large additions to the peerage which he persuaded the king to make rendered it fairly representative of the country, and may be said to have saved the "Second Chamber" through all subsequent changes. Along with his lifelong friend Wilberforce he attacked the slave trade, and would surely have abolished it before his death had not the war set in. We may, in fact, sum up his great peace administration in the remark that every portion of the national inheritance received at his hands a new life, or was only robbed of the gift by the general conflagration. This was the work of a statesman, not of a mere politician.

Pitt's remedial legislation marched in ordered array along with the accelerated progress of manufactures and industries of all kinds which had distinguished the latter half of the century. In defiance of war and political strife canals had multiplied in every direction, and the great beds of English coal were thus brought into use ready for the railways of our times. Watt's steam-engine, and the improved machinery which had been suggested by the vast development of industry, revolutionised trade, and turned England into the great workshop of the world; while the agricultural growth vied with that of manufactures. British ships covered the ocean; and wealth beyond all European experience extended from the middle classes to those above, and to a great extent to those below them. All that the nation, all that the king and Pitt wanted, was a continuance of peace. Instead of peace came war. We must examine the causes.

CHAPTER X.

GEORGE III.—PART III.

A VERY little consideration of the state of Europe before and during the French Revolution will explain the foreign policy of Pitt and the king. It can hardly but convince us that their policy was in true accord with the best English precedents, and that it exhibited a forbearance and even sympathy with the difficulties of the French which is not always attributed to the British Government. It was under Pitt's peace administration that the old world of Europe gave place to the new order of things under which it now exists. The four great Treaties of the century in which the British had taken the chief part, had familiarised Europe with the regulation of its several States by the Great Powers. The Public Law of Europe—International Law, as we now call it—had been recognised ever since the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648 as a more or less binding force; but the advent of Prussia and Russia to the rank of Great Powers had required new adjustment, by means of new and terrible wars, of the so-called Balance of Power; all of which, up to the time of the Peace of Paris in 1763, appeared to be complete. Far from it. A very few years showed where the weakness lay.

The exhaustion of France and England after their struggle for Colonial empire tempted the three Eastern Powers in 1770 to adopt the selfish, unprincipled, and fatal breach of Public Law known as the Partition of Poland. This banished all respect for the common government of Europe, and laid the foundation for the tremendous wars we are now about to describe. Even Chatham failed to perceive the growing danger from the power of Russia which was thus threatened, wielded as it was by the most unscrupulous of monarchs, Catharine II.; and his son was, therefore, at a great disadvantage. William Pitt had now to deal with Russian encroachments not only in the Baltic, but on Turkey and the Levant. The first of these he found it easier to deal with than the second. He did succeed in keeping the Baltic free, but the utmost he was able to do in the Mediterranean was to prevent the Emperor Joseph, whom the

1770.

Czarina used as a sort of tool, from joining her in breaking up Turkey. What Europe could not, or would not, join Pitt in doing at that time for the support of International Law, has formed the "Eastern Question" ever since.

The ideas of political freedom and revolt from ancient forms of government, which were making their way from the American Colonies at this very time, found a soil already well prepared by the social and political theories of Voltaire and Rousseau. It required only a little to fire a mass of inflammable material. The death of Frederick the Great in
1786. 1786, of the one strong man who had made and preserved the condition of Europe for half a century, presented the opportunity for the leaders of the popular movement, who plainly saw that the new ideas were incompatible with the feudal system of the Continent—a system which no revolutions, no conflicting dynasties, had broken up as they had in England. Looking about on Frederick's death for strong men, the public eye rested on the credulous Joseph, the victim of crude ideas, and the well-meaning Louis XVI., equally feeble and amiable, and, like Charles I., rendered still more helpless by his queen. Frederick might have said with more truth than Metternich, "After me the Deluge." He did not understand how much he had himself had to do with the encouragement of that false growth of unbelief and irreligion which was foisted upon the new ideas of freedom, and which was soon to display itself in the forefront of the movement. It was natural that France should be the first to explode. She was the most hampered with intolerable anomalies, and her upper classes the least capable of dealing with the necessary reform.

1789. The French Revolution broke out in 1789. Let us for the moment regard it simply as it affected the Foreign Policy of Great Britain. Its almost immediate effect was the propagandist invasion of Holland, for which Pitt had, however, made provision, and we must watch his proceedings. The temptation to France had proceeded from a theory of the Emperor Joseph that he could act just as if there had been no previous wars and treaties in Europe, and could rebuild his crumbling empire in any way that seemed convenient. He would incorporate Bavaria with Austria, and give in exchange to the Elector of Bavaria the Austrian

Netherlands. As early as 1781 he began to work out his plans by stopping the pay which he was bound by treaty to supply to the Dutch troops in the barrier towns,—that barrier against France on which united Europe had found it necessary to lavish such a vast expenditure of blood and money in order to curb the ambition of Louis XIV. His next step was to dismantle these fortresses; and the only obstacles being removed, the French agitators, now springing up by thousands, began to flock into the Low Countries, considering them very much as if they were a part of France. He now demanded the free navigation of the Scheldt, and was only prevented from completing the exchange of Bavaria for the Netherlands by Frederick the Great's peremptory prohibition, supported by an armed force. This was the last political act of the old hero, the very year before his death. 1785.

The new French preponderance in Flanders naturally affected Holland, and strengthened so much the democratic party that their opponents, the hereditary party of the Stadtholder, were thrown into a close relation with England. This Pitt lost no time in consolidating into an alliance, after the old English fashion, between Great Britain, Prussia, and Sweden, along with Holland, which as yet had kept at least the administration of government in the hands of the Stadtholder. By a stroke of the pen Sweden was thus delivered from Russia, Prussia from France and Russia, Holland, for the moment, from France. But far above all, in return for the responsibilities thus accepted, Great Britain acquired the treaty-right to ward off from the Dutch coasts which lay opposite English shores French armies and French fleets. Throughout her history this was the danger in order to meet which England had incessantly made her alliances. It was her second line of defence behind the Channel itself.

The centuries during which the Flemish alliance with England had existed before the Dutch achieved their independence of Spain, and the subsequent support of the Dutch by England against their tyrants in Spain and France, had bound the peoples on either shore of the Channel together with cords of sympathy quite beyond the ties of diplomacy, and strong enough to obliterate the marks of the old bygone naval struggle for supremacy. Hanover and Hol-

land, as we have seen, had worked loyally together, and the victorious alliances with the empire against France had united the Austrian Netherlands with the English almost as much as the Dutch. Thus, when in 1792 the French, invited by the Dutch and Flemish democrats, took possession of the Low Countries, there was still a strong British party there, and the Government of Great Britain had to consider whether the cry which reached them from their friends was not only a call of honour, but one for the preservation of England itself. It was, in fact, a vital assault on the side of the oldest and most indispensable part of her foreign policy.

We must now outline the French Revolution. We have glanced at its underlying causes. The proximate cause was financial bankruptcy, and the failure of minister after minister to deal with it. The king himself and some of his officials honestly desired reform, but the extravagance of the queen and the court, the virtual immunity of the immense "noble" class from taxation, and the gross laxity of the clergy, —all these things called for a remedy which could not possibly but have been violent. The power which alone could force a reform was the peculiarly ignorant and brutalised proletariat of Paris, hereditary victims of political error, and true successors of the Parisians of the fifteenth century. They gave the Revolution its special character. Under the auspices of the mob-flatterers, who rose to power one after another by the same base means, it developed into a Revolution of distinctly propagandist character, declared war against all moral law, dethroned religion, proclaimed, as Burke said, a "gospel of plunder," and instead of the universal "equality" which was its cherished watchword, exterminated the rich and distinguished, the nobles and the clergy. By unbridled violence it destroyed for the time the sacred cause of constitutional progress and personal liberty, and by insisting on rallying under its banner by persuasion or force all the rest of the world, it made deadly enemies of those who did not agree with these new missionaries. Whether France could have removed the abuses of ages by any less violent methods, no one can say. As it was, it could but run its predestined course of anarchy and war, could only end in centralisation, could only obtain order once more at the hands of a successful general, an enlightened

despot, an unscrupulous reorganiser of institutions, — a Napoleon,—and then begin again under better auspices.

The successive efforts of Turgot, Necker, and Calonne to restore financial credit having failed, we begin the long series of public attempts at reform in 1787 with the Assembly of Notables, or selected nobles, last summoned by Richelieu. The entire helplessness of this Assembly caused the summons of the States-General, last called together by Henri IV. It met at Versailles in 1789, and almost immediately suffered 1789.
the loss of its ancient national position by the act of the Third Estate, which usurped and absorbed the functions of the nobles and the clergy. On June 17, with the accomplishment of this change, and the assumption of the title of "National Assembly," commenced in reality the Revolution, though the taking of the Bastille on July 14 is reckoned the actual date. That act of the infuriated mob was the result of several street-conflicts, and was followed in the course of three weeks by a general rising of the people and the first emigration of the Nobles. Resistance was now organised by the Court and the officers of the army at Versailles; and this drove the Parisians wild with terror and fury. Then came the storming of Versailles by the new National Guards, the fraternisation of the troops, and the virtual imprisonment of the king and queen in Paris. The Provincial Centres, once so powerful, might yet have interposed; but the Provinces were immediately broken up, and the eighty-three "Departments of France" took their place,—a long step no doubt towards the unity of the nation and its ability to put forth its full strength. The funds of the Church were "nationalised," and a vast issue of assignats was made on the security of its estates. Instead of the ancient system, a State-paid bishop was appointed to each department, and a salary paid by the State to the clergy who accepted, as many did, the Revolution. All offices were now made elective, and all power taken from the Crown except the initiative of declaring war; but even so, only the legislative body could actually declare war.

The death of Mirabeau, who had been as yet the soul of the Revolution, removed (in 1790) the one man who might 1790.
possibly have controlled it. The Jacobin Club now takes the lead, and soon the men at the head of affairs are Robes-

pierre of that Club, Danton of the Cordeliers, and Santerre in the Faubourgs. Both sides prepare for civil war. The Emigrés call in the Emperor Leopold and the King of Prussia, and embody themselves for the invasion of France by the way of the Rhine. Answering the call, these allied sovereigns declare, at the Convention of Pilnitz, that the situation of the imprisoned Louis is "a matter of common concern, and that a general alliance should be formed to deliver him, even by force of arms." Great Britain positively refused to join. Pitt stood stiffly to the principle of Non-intervention. Well aware of the needs of France, he and his friends hoped to the very last that the movement would end in a practical system of government.

1791. On the flight and capture of the royal family in June 1791, a new phase of the Revolution was reached. The National Assembly which, when charged with the formation of a new Constitution, had taken the title of the "Constituent Assembly," gave place in the autumn of this year to the "Legislative Assembly," which it had proposed, and which was led by the Girondins. There is still a king with a veto and the right of appointing ministers, but with no other power whatever. This the wretched monarch, grand, like Charles I., in adversity, soon discovers. He was in hourly danger, the people being furious with him as the cause of the risings in La Vendée and of the collection of the hostile armies on the frontier which were vowing vengeance on Paris if he were injured. Every one was in terror of his neighbour. On

1792. June 20, 1792, the king and queen are baited by the mob who invade the Tuileries, and have to face it for hours. The Jacobins having now superseded the Girondins, who are voted inefficient, the Allies bring matters to a point by an ill-judged manifesto; and on August 10 mob-violence reaches its climax in the dreadful storm of the Tuileries, and the close imprisonment of the royal family, already half-dead with fatigue and anxiety. The "Reign of Terror" commences, and foreign ambassadors withdraw. The Paris Commune, which is now supreme, is responsible for the horrible "September Massacres" of all the nobles and priests confined in the prisons. During three days about 2000 were put to death in cold blood.

Side by side with the fury of the capital went the mustering

of troops over against the Allies on the frontier. Civilised war was about to take the place of mob-ferocity, and it was a good exchange. Kellerman's victory at Valmy and the Duke of Brunswick's retreat now gave an entirely new turn to events. It acted like an electric shock. All France, animated by a simultaneous burst of patriotism, sprang to its feet, an armed nation. The National Convention of September 21, 1792, proclaims it a Republic. Marat and Robespierre are at the head of a victorious people, not only defending France, but bursting forth in multitudes over its boundaries. Dumouriez wins the battle of Jemappes, and now that the barrier towns are dismantled, easily overruns the Netherlands; Worms and Mainz fall next, and the Duchy of Savoy, with Nice and Villafranca, soon finds its place as a new part of France, an 84th Department. In short, the immense living force of republican enthusiasm, regardless of all limits of territory, all treaties, and all neutral rights, surges onward, denouncing every power that is not republican; and, being only opposed by feeble, half-hearted military levies of the old school, sweeps everything before it. The famous Edict of Fraternity, addressed to all nations and issued in all languages, and the decision to open the Scheldt in spite of the opposition both of Holland and England, left no doubt as to the character of the movement.

The trial of the king could not of course be delayed. The difficulty of destroying him by legal process was that he had been formally deposed, and could not be brought under charges of conspiracy as king. We know how courageously he was defended, his noble end (January 21, 1793); and how the Juxon of the death-scene, the Irish priest, Edgeworth, is said to have pronounced the famous words: "Son of St Louis, ascend to heaven." Indignant Europe — but not Great Britain, which took no further step than to withdraw its still lingering ambassador—instantly and furiously declared war. It declared war against the propagandist Republic without a head, regarding it as a mere monstrosity which must be stamped out. Every moral sentiment was indeed naturally shocked; but Europe had yet to learn that France had a lesson to teach, and that other nations also were to be taught—taught, as usual, by suffering. In some way or other the ideas of personal liberty and human progress 1793.

were to be infiltrated and adopted into the ancient system of political life. The leaven, once inserted, could never cease to work; nor has it yet ceased.

CHAPTER XI.

GEORGE III.—PART IV.

We have treated the French Revolution at what may seem a disproportionate length, but it ranks, as a pregnant event, big with a thousand other movements, along with the break-up of the Roman Empire and the Reformation. We have now to recur to the attitude of Great Britain. The challenge to war did not come from her but from France, which having already declared war against Holland, followed it up on February 8, 1793, by a Declaration of War against her own ancient rival. They could not long have been kept apart.

There were three distinct views amongst British statesmen. Fox and the extreme party of the Whigs were fervent admirers of the Revolution: Burke and the moderate Whigs, who soon carried the Tories along with them, and then the mass of the nation, were equally fervent in their detestation of it. Pitt, holding together with himself his immediate friends, was bent on absolute neutrality. Embarked as he was in the full career of national reform and development, nothing, he said, should induce him to meddle with the internal affairs of France, "unless the conduct of their Government should make it indispensable as an act of self-defence." This we must now admit was the proper course, but from the first moment of the outbreak there were forces at work which proved too strong for Pitt. The British people generally may be said to have looked on at the political conflagration with alarm and anxiety, mingled with dislike and contempt; but Republican Societies rapidly sprang up in England, and sympathetic addresses to the Revolutionists were paraded before the public.

Burke, on the other hand, was even more prompt than the agitators. His famous book, 'Reflections on the Revolution in France,' was actually published in October 1790, long before the worst atrocities of the movement had thrilled through Europe; and falling in, as it did exactly, with the general bent of the national mind, it ran through thirty editions at a stride. It could not be produced fast enough. Though it had, with all its merits, the serious defect of palliating the abuses of the feudal system of France, which had been destroyed by the Revolution, it had an extraordinary effect in rallying the country round the standard of war—war for self-defence against Revolutionary Propaganda. His soul was stirred to its lowest depths. The cause of true and constitutional freedom, for which he had been struggling all his life, seemed in his old age to be lost, and a barbaric licence to be impending over his country. Early in 1791 came his breach with Fox in the House, when with a burst of tears Fox cried: "There is no breach of friendship." "Yes," said Burke, "there is, I know;—our friendship is at an end."

We must then trace the progress of the war-spirit in England by the writings of this great statesman. In April 1791 appeared his 'Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs,' a most justifiable protest against the abuse of party names; and this led the way to the severance of Fox's friends from the mass of the Whigs, led by the Duke of Portland. But it was the magnitude of the movement and the persistence of the French Revolutionists in attempting to bring over the British to their cause which still more enforced the pressure now brought to bear upon Pitt. He was busy with the Slave-Trade Abolitionists, with a scheme for Tithe Commutation, and many other beneficent reforms. Even in 1792 he looked forward to "fifteen years of peace." But he could not conceal from himself that the emissaries of France were only too successfully pouring into the country a flood of seditious papers, and that these were rapidly bearing fruit. Sections of society, even soldiers and sailors, were corrupted. French gold accompanied the papers. What we now call "Communism" was widely and openly proclaimed: "All kings are tyrants; all ministers corrupt; all priests hypocrites; all rule is slavery; the rich are the

natural enemies of the poor." Risings of the people, inflamed by these cries, took place at Yarmouth, at Sheffield, at Dundee. Yet still Pitt rather felt with Fox than with Burke, and even attempted to make a Coalition with him. That failed. The country became alarmed, and insisted on the militia being called out; and when, on the murder of Louis, even Fox supported war-measures, Pitt could no longer refuse. Sedition for the moment shrank away; every statesman was for war; the country was practically united.
1797. Thus when the French Declaration of War came, it was met by a great British shout of defiance. The whole country felt that it had on this occasion at least a just cause, and might be expected to stand the more firmly to its resolution since it had been so long restrained.

We enter then the THIRD PERIOD of the reign,—the war
1793-1815. from 1793 to 1815, broken at the Peace of Amiens by a space of fourteen months in 1801-1803. Great Britain was the last to join the allies; she was also the last to stand out against the almost uniform series of disasters which befell them for several years. This persistence was due to her insular situation, her financial credit, her commerce, and, above all, her navy. Neither her own regular army, nor that of Austria, nor that of Prussia, were in the least fitted to cope with the whole French nation turned into a band of political crusaders, and officered by men who were selected for courage and talent shown in the field. Routine and drill sank at once before unfettered military genius, combined with a spirit of patriotic enthusiasm. "We are at war with armed opinions," said Pitt a little later. Thus subsidies upon subsidies, lavishly heaped beyond precedent upon the continental States in alliance, seemed to produce no result; and the British army in Holland, its natural place of employment for defence of the British Isles, year after year repeated the monotonous round of failure and retreat. The smallness of British armies in time of peace has always necessitated some years of war training before officers of the highest type can be created. Those years—1793, 1794, 1795, and 1799—did at last give the required training. Abercrombie and Moore were gradually raising the military standard, and Wellesley was at least learning what were the causes of failure. Brave and efficient in some respects as

the Duke of York was, he was wanting in the qualities of a general, and the king as well as the nation had to learn that there was no royal road to military skill.

There was no difficulty of this sort in wielding the right arm of Great Britain, the Royal Navy, and it so happened that in sea affairs the balance was completely reversed. The Revolution had indeed infused into the spirit of French seamen the patriotic enthusiasm which forced their armies to the first rank in Europe, but sea officers cannot be made in a day. The French Royal Navy had been a peculiarly aristocratic service, and the cry of "À bas les aristocrats!" had taken them off the quarter-deck. Neither were republican ideas of equality favourable to nautical discipline, nor were mere politicians, sent on board to watch and report upon the officers, likely to be of much use in the day of battle, or at any other time. It has not been observed as it ought to have been that these circumstances greatly enhance the merits of those officers of the French Navy to whom it fell to support the honour of their flag. Demoralised by a monotonous series of disasters, each of which inspired its enemy with increasing confidence, they never had a chance, yet they nobly fought on till they were swept off the seas.

The British Navy, on the other hand, was never more ready for its task. The wars which founded the empire had formed a school of officers of the highest type. They had been naval, colonial, and imperial wars, while the army had, since Marlborough's time, been merely subsidiary to those of the German States. Rodney, who had only just passed away, and Howe, still able to command a fleet, were Hawke's pupils, and like him were in their turn trainers of the navy. The standard had been maintained, and was to prove itself capable of being raised still higher by Nelson, who was the perfect product, as an officer, of half a century of naval progress. Such a navy and such officers no country ever had before, and none will in all probability ever have again.

The admirals for the great commands were marked out for Pitt plainly enough—Lord Howe for the Channel, and Lord Hood, who had been Rodney's able coadjutor in the West Indies, for the Mediterranean. Hood struck the first blow by the burning of the Toulon fleet, but as the British

were forced to evacuate the harbour by a young lieutenant of artillery, Napoleon Buonaparte, this useful service was soon forgotten. Howe's victory off Ushant, on the "glorious
1794. First of June" 1794, was, on the contrary, one of those which largely influence history. The fleets being of equal force, the capture of six line-of-battle ships and burning of another seemed to be an omen of the triumph of loyal, old-fashioned England over revolutionary and regicide France. It would have been more decisive if Howe had been younger, and if all his captains had behaved equally well; but it had a vast effect in encouraging the people to bear up under the disasters which showered down upon the land forces of the Allies. It was evident that the British colonies were now safe, and that those of the enemy must fall into British hands. If conquered nations were forced to lend their fleets to the conqueror, their colonies could no longer be protected, and an expanding trade would enable the country to bear the expansion of the National Debt. In a succession of great officers,—Jervis, Bridport, Duncan, Collingwood, and above all in Nelson,—it was soon seen that there was a counterpoise to Hoche, Pichegru, Moreau, Jourdan, and Napoleon's own marshals. Eventually the general would be found who was to be successfully matched with the highest genius of them all. He was being trained for that conflict in successive schools of service, the most important of which was India, where he arrived in 1797.

India and Ireland were the two dangerous portions of the empire. The former, under Cornwallis's excellent government, was prepared for the troubles which the French war soon began to develop. It was his courage and generalship which first subdued the threatening power of Tippoo Saib at a critical moment for British supremacy; and when Lord Mornington and his brother found themselves face to face with the direct attempts of Napoleon to stir up the old antagonisms, the clever policy of one brother and the fine campaigns of the other soon placed the great peninsula beyond attack. On Cornwallis's general lines of policy they erected the system of Subsidiary States, grouped around those conquered by the British, and retained in close connection with the Government—a system which has lasted in principle down to our own day.

The seditious influences which led up to the Irish Rebellion of 1798 were an offshoot of those which began to beset the English Government very soon after the war began; and these last may be noticed before we trace their course in Ireland. Pitt has been blamed for making too much, as is said, of seditious meetings which did not really influence any large section of the English or Scottish people, and for bringing their leaders to trial when he was frequently unable to obtain a conviction. Perhaps the best method of forming a judgment as to the danger arising from the violence and contagion of these meetings is to study the popular writings and caricatures of the time. The animus of the clubs and societies which organised them, and sometimes collected a mob of 150,000 people, may be judged by their favourite song, which in many great towns took with the lowest classes the place of "God Save the King." The chorus run thus:—

"Plant, plant the tree, fair freedom's tree,
Midst dangers, wounds, and slaughter;
Each patriot's breast its soil shall be,
And tyrants' blood its water."

We must remember that there was nothing that could be called a police, and that several dangerous riots had occurred in London. It was of the last importance to prevent the forces of anarchy from gathering to the proportions of civil war, under which the whole empire and its influence on Europe would have collapsed. The difficulties of legal proceedings were great, but it was necessary to face them. The laws had not been framed for such cases; juries were ignorant, timid, or themselves tainted. Nor were the Crown lawyers equal to the occasion; advocates like Erskine overpowered them. But there was this more than sufficient compensation for the failure to convict. The trials lasted long; men's eyes were fixed on the legal process, and however ill-disposed learnt to value the justice of the Courts. If traitors were unpunished, treason was prevented. Even Lord Eldon said at a later date that the exposure of the seditious Societies was the chief object of the trials. Failure was better than neglect. Pitt showed no vexation at the acquittals, and disaffection died down.

It was only in Ireland that the French Revolution principles were able to unite any large section of the people in their favour and incite them to actual rebellion. There the ground had been well prepared by the sympathy which had been felt with the American revolt, and by the Separatist Parliament, commonly called Grattan's Parliament, at Dublin. Pitt had already attemped to deal with Irish grievances in the best spirit, but, as the event showed, it was too late to make any great changes, now that the power of the English Parliament had, under the pressure of the late war, been relinquished. Thus he had no sooner abrogated the Penal Laws with respect to education, succession to estates, votes at elections (on condition of taking the oaths of allegiance and abjuration), and admission to civil and military office, than he was met by a still more determined hostility than ever on the part of those who demanded a seat in Parliament for Roman Catholics. These irreconcilable politicians finding that the king, at the head of the great mass of the English and Scottish people, was firmly opposed to this concession, and acting in full concert with the French, formed themselves into Societies, of which the "United Irishmen," under Wolfe Tone and Napper Tandy, was the chief. A regular system of intimidation was organised, and a scarcely veiled rebellion raised its head.

The recall of Lord Fitzwilliam, who had been sent to make all reasonable concessions, was the consequence of his own ill-judged proceedings, especially of his precipitancy on the question of Emancipation, but it gave the signal for the
1795. Rebellion, which really began in 1795, though its great organised effort took place in 1798. The Orange Lodges of the Northern Protestants were formed in self-defence, and not too soon; for, in concert with the rebels, the French Government ordered Napoleon to invade England, and the English could spare but few regular troops to resist. It fell to Hoche to take his place, but the ill-concerted attempt
1797. came to nothing. In 1797, however, it was found necessary to disarm the Ulster rebels, and later on those of the south. This was performed with great skill, and some severity, by General Lake. The situation was more difficult than one of open war. The reprisals of the rebels became more and more cruel; midnight outrages of every kind broke up

society; the Jacobin Clubs at Dublin and Belfast ordered regiments of "National Guards" to be levied, with French uniforms and pass-words; and the "League of United Irishmen" bound themselves to accept no redress from Parliament. In short, Ireland was about to be handed over to France.

Just at this crisis, the armed Rebellion being concerted to break out all over Ireland on May 23, 1798, the Government 1798.
obtained complete intelligence from one of the conspirators, and nipped it in the bud by the seizure of Lord Edward Fitzgerald. Nevertheless partial risings took place in Leinster and Ulster, which were easily suppressed. The real conflict took place in Wexford, which had been supposed to be loyal, but General Moore defeated a large body at Goff Bridge, General Lake the main force at Vinegar Hill, and Wexford was taken. Lord Cornwallis was now sent to deal with the captured rebels, and with the new French army, which, on August 22, arrived in County Mayo, under General Humbert—just too late. This force, after routing with ease some hastily collected militia, surrendered to Cornwallis's army, and the ships were taken, with Wolfe Tone and Tandy on board. They both escaped, the first by suicide.

Cornwallis had a difficult task,—to interpose between the upper classes, timid and exasperated, and the wretched victims of the priests and conspirators. Not even regarding the orders of the English Privy Council, he at once issued an amnesty; but he was strong in the support of Pitt, and with him set about effecting the long required Union, now felt on all hands to be absolutely necessary. This great Act could not, however, be completed till 1800, as questions of com- 1800.
pensation for loss of office and patronage, and the necessary inducements of peerages and pensions, could not be adjusted all at once. Lord Castlereagh, Cornwallis's Chief Secretary, bore the brunt of these multitudinous negotiations, which were tainted with painful circumstances, but must be regarded in the light of the history of that century, and compared with the Scottish Union of 1707. The king called it the "happiest event of his life," and next to the loss of the American colonies, which he called the most unhappy, it was the most important.

Nevertheless the inbred distrust entertained of the Roman

Catholics, whose religious system was still believed by the English and Scotch to place them necessarily under a hateful and dangerous foreign yoke, prevented Pitt and Cornwallis from adopting the complete "emancipation of the Roman Catholics," and the "concurrent endowment" of the Irish priesthood. Pitt never forgot the refusal of the king, who had supported him, and was about to support him again, in all his other measures; but, right or wrong, George III. was the true representative of Great Britain—of the bishops, the judges, the peers, perhaps the majority of the Commons, and certainly of the country generally—at that time.

CHAPTER XII.

GEORGE III.—PART V.

As we have found it necessary in this eventful reign to trace the origin and progress of the French Revolution in order that we might interpret the course of English history, so we must take up again its further development before we proceed further with the wars to which it gave rise. The murder of Louis XVI. at once committed France to the alternative that she must either conquer her external enemies or perish; it was also the signal for the outbreak of internal struggles. Dumouriez deserted the cause, and by his treachery enabled Austria to recover the Netherlands. This it was which destroyed the Girondins, who reaped what they had sown, and threw France into the hands of Robespierre and the Committee of Public Safety. Under this Reign of Terror, the intrepid Queen Marie Antoinette and the brilliant Madame Roland were pitiably guillotined, Royalists ruthlessly drowned by hundreds at Nantes, Christianity abolished, and an infamous "Goddess of Reason" exhibited to the Paris multitudes. But a million of enthusiastic conscripts defied the rising of the loyalists in La Vendée (the old Poitou), and baffled the feeble generalship of the Duke of Coburg and the Duke of York. The Netherlands were

once more lost at a blow by the want of concert, by slavery to routine, and by reliance on the impostor, General Mack. The seizure of Condé and Valenciennes by the Germans as conquests had also a very bad effect; for their troops were paid by Great Britain, and it placed the Allies in the light of mere selfish combatants.

The spirit of the English rose high after the naval battle of the First of June; but almost from the first a peace party began to spring up, and Pitt himself more or less belonged to it. His war-policy by land was at this time uniformly unfortunate, and his attempt to use the French refugees for the assistance of La Vendée proved their entire incompetence. Even his father would have failed to make any impression on the French enthusiasts with such tools as were alone as yet at the disposal of his son. It may suit these outlines to sum up the numerous attempts which were made to obtain a peace. In 1795 Pitt made overtures, but the tide of French success was running strong, and they would not listen. In 1796 negotiations broke off on the question of the Netherlands, which, since they were vital to the safety of England, Pitt would not hear of giving up. In 1797 the French laughed at him for thinking of such a thing as peace; for a grand vista was opening up by the advent of Napoleon. Nor did any further prospect present itself till the First Consul, in 1800, himself made propositions which were a transparent piece of trickery—a plan, as he afterwards confessed, for amusing the British while he attacked Austria. Whether this anxiety for peace befitted the dignity of Great Britain may be questioned, but the facts dispose of the old charge of warlike malignity which once was commonly levelled against Pitt. It is not surprising that he had been so reluctant to begin: he was pretty well aware that the fight, when it did begin, would have to be fought out.

The war-trumpet was blown by Burke. The nation, as it had followed him in his earlier call to battle, so it followed in the same way his celebrated "Letters on a Regicide Peace." The last of his fiery utterances in the House was in reply to Sheridan, who had expressed a fear that the French might refuse quarter to their rebels in the English service. "I hear," said Burke, "a fear expressed that we shall inflame the Jacobins by severity. Inflame a Jacobin! you may as

well talk of setting fire to hell." Refusing a peerage, the great statesman, bowed down by the death of his son, retired to Beaconsfield, where he still lived to do much public work in private life. His retirement suggests that we ought not to part with him without the remark that he, the devoted friend of Johnson, Reynolds, and Goldsmith, and the consistent exponent and champion of the British Constitution all through the most eventful period of its history, was also the one statesman who has represented the literary, religious, and philosophical side of politics in a career of the highest order as well as in immortal works.

It was owing to this settled resolution of the country that, though sorely tried by the taxes which were necessary for the war, they were on the whole cheerfully borne. When Pitt laid a tax on spirits, bricks, tiles, plate-glass, and attorneys, "not even," says Lord Stanhope, "did the attorneys complain." Enormous loans were effected at moderate interest. The Volunteers were armed by public subscription. The French Royalists were enlisted, Hessian troops quartered in the Isle of Wight. The king subscribed large sums from his private purse, and was followed by the principal noblemen, gentry, and merchants. The majorities in Parliament became monotonous. As the war went on, Fox and his friends even seceded altogether from the House, and the largest number of votes against the Government did not exceed twenty-five.

The sentiments of moral aversion and disgust which the brutalities of the Revolution had excited were soon exchanged for the more ordinary feelings of alarm arising from the progress of Napoleon. The guidance of France did not long remain in the hands of "sea green Robespierre." There has been some attempt of late years to elevate him above the savage crew with whom he had risen and struggled, but the Reign of Terror was certainly at its worst under him; and it did not make the butchery much better that he was a Stoical Deist, and far less courageous than his associates and victims. But it is worth observing that Napoleon Buonaparte was so close an adherent of this cruel demagogue that he and his brother spoke of the future Emperor as "their man," and it was through their patronage that he rose in 1795 to the command of the Army of Italy. Napoleon, however, disapproved of their "excesses."

The Committee of Public Safety was succeeded in 1795 by the "Constitution of the Year Three," the year of the king's murder counting as the "year one." The "Directory" consisted of a body of five Directors who formed the executive, five hundred members of a Senate, and five hundred members of a Council. This was the Government which Napoleon saved from an insurrectionary mob; and thus becoming identified with it, the youthful artillery officer of 1794 mounted in less than two years to the practical leadership of the State. He immediately proved his military genius by defeating several Austrian generals of the old school, and driving them out of Italy. When the Archduke Charles, the one single general of the Allies who evinced military talent, had succeeded in forcing Moreau and Jourdan to retreat from Germany, and had turned upon the conqueror of Italy, he at once found his master; and in little more than a year from commencing the campaign Napoleon dictated the Peace of Campo Formio (Oct. 27, 1797), which gave nearly the whole of Italy to the French. The new conquest was now called the Cisalpine Republic, and Holland the Batavian Republic. Prussia had previously consented to leave the Rhine as the French boundary, and Spain had become an ally. 1797.

Great Britain was practically left alone. In the fact of the French acquisition of the Low Countries with their navies and their commerce, and their consequent possession of the means of strangling the freedom of the one hope of the world, lay the true reason for holding out. Pitt knew that his desire for peace could never carry the nation with it on the basis of relinquishing those States. Though aghast at the prospect before them, the British people embraced the alternative of war with decision. They had the king at their head, one with them in their unerring instincts; and Pitt braced himself to the task of rallying Europe from its prostrate condition. No less than 60,000 militiamen and 20,000 yeomanry answered to the national call; the whole island began to echo with the drill-sergeant's words of command, and Jervis's victory off Cape St Vincent over the Spanish fleet once more taught the country where its real strength lay. It did still more service by pointing out Nelson as the man of genius who might, though on a different element, be

brought to the front as a balance to the genius of the young conqueror whose advent had terrified the world. Its immediate effect, completed by the subsequent battle of Camperdown, was to break up the combination of Dutch and Spanish fleets with the French, which was being formed on the old plan to protect the invasion of England. As it happened, the only force which landed was frightened away by an apparition of Welsh women in hats and scarlet cloaks.

No sooner had these inspiriting ideas concerning the Royal Navy taken possession of minds greatly in want of some tangible ground of reliance, than the fleets mutinied, and the right arm of the nation was thus struck, as by a flash of lightning, with paralysis. It was perhaps the most serious crisis which the British people ever had to face, but the danger once surmounted, it did good in the end. Relying on the loyalty and popularity of the Naval Service, no organised attempt had been made to deal with abuses of many kinds, which bore with exceeding hardness on the seamen. This was the combustible material of grievances on which the spark of revolutionary spirit fell, and it could hardly but produce a flame. The signal for mutiny was
1797. given to the great fleet at Spithead, in April 1797, by the order to put to sea. The admirals of the fleet were commissioned to treat with the men, who at first refused; but their grievances were just, and when removed by concessions as to pay, provisions, leave on shore, and stoppage of pay to the wounded, they came to terms on one condition, which was that the king himself, and no one instead of him, should sign their pardon. They knew they could trust him; and this was accordingly done. The fleet now obeyed orders, weighed, and dropped down to St Helen's, the eastern anchorage of the Isle of Wight.

But another and worse mutiny soon broke out, entirely in consequence of the Admiralty having misconceived the gravity of the situation, and issued an untimely order as to discipline. Lord Howe, revered as the "Father of the Navy," was now sent down with full powers, and made, as was thought by many, concessions of even too great a magnitude, amounting to almost total surrender. He allowed the mutineers to turn out of the fleet an unpopular admiral, four captains, and a hundred other officers. Order was indeed

restored in this particular fleet, which sailed for France; but the mutiny, thus only half suppressed, spread to the Nore, a far more dangerous locality, and it was characterised by a far worse spirit under the guidance of Parker, a clever and desperate leader. The alarm in London resembled that of the Rebellion of 1745; but it was plain that the new demands were inadmissible, amounting, as they did, to the absolute destruction of all discipline in the future.

The Government had now no choice in the matter, and determined to put it down by force. Pardon was offered and refused, and the affair reached its climax when the fleet watching the Dutch off the Texel, all except two ships, came over to the mutineers, and the Woolwich artillerymen, on whom the Government relied, showed signs of corruption. The alarm may be measured by the fact that the Lords of the Admiralty came down to meet Parker; but his insolence was intolerable. Troops were now marched to London, gunboats manned, and all buoys and beacons in the Thames removed. Parliament passed bills to prohibit intercourse with the fleet, and the isolated crews began to feel the effects of starvation. They appealed to the king, but he peremptorily insisted on instant submission; and the crews of other fleets, now loyal, added their remonstrances. At last they gave way, ship by ship, Parker firing on them as they each in turn deserted his red flag of mutiny. He soon finds himself powerless, is captured and hung, while the other leaders were flogged round the fleet. Duncan's ships now rejoin him off the Texel, and, vehemently penitent, wipe out the stain of mutiny by their gallant behaviour at Camperdown. Here, again, the British, though of not more than equal force, capture no less than nine line-of-battle ships, not, however, without great loss. Thus the hostile fleets were gradually disposed of, and Nelson found himself in a condition to complete the work. The Royal Navy more than resumed its old place, and its officers learnt many lessons, as also did the Admiralty and the seamen.

Everything now centres round Napoleon, the child of the Revolution. Detaching himself from all previous maxims of war, he it was who first taught the French armies to support themselves on the systematic plunder of their enemies, and thus to throw off the cloak of democratic fraternity, the

guise of liberators from tyrants. This was more honest, but less defensible; more convenient for the moment, but ruinous in the end. The brutal unscrupulousness with which the Italian Governments were in turn destroyed, lies and frauds of all sorts perpetrated, and priceless art treasures carried off,—a practice unknown in the world since Rome sacked Corinth, — were coin from the same mint. It was in September 1797 that he began the process of breaking up the Directory, with a view to the open assumption of supreme power. Beginning, at the instance of the Directors themselves, with the Council, it took him two years to seat himself openly in the place of his patrons. Thankful to get rid of him for a time at least, they encouraged his wild design upon the East, which he conceived as an alternative plan of attack upon Great Britain, more hopeful than direct invasion. It was the first of the three strategical errors which brought about his overthrow. The second was the seizure of Spain in 1807. The third was the invasion of Russia in 1812. There was an entire want of military calculation about the first; the second showed gross ignorance of the strength that lay in an outraged people, if they could only receive support from a great naval Power; the third was an infatuation.

The expedition to Egypt, which was to seat the French at Constantinople and drive the English from India, could hardly but fail so long as the British navy was in competent
1798. hands. Nelson's magnificent Battle of the Nile, which, like Hawke's at Quiberon, disposed of the whole of the enemy's fleet at a blow, immortalised the hero, and left Napoleon a fugitive. Sydney Smith caught and stopped him at Acre. Escaping from his army, which he had led into a trap, he now devoted all his energies to the overthrow of the British, at whose hands he had suffered; and, mainly no doubt with this view, soon after his return he executed the *coup d'état* of November 19, 1799, known as the 18th Brumaire. Under the new "Constitution of the Year Eight" (1800) one of the many invented by the Abbé Siéyés, he became First Consul, with a power practically unlimited, and which received no substantial addition when it was exchanged for the title of "Emperor." Armed with this immense position, he instantly, with the instincts of consummate genius, set to

work to reorganise all the institutions of the country. The two inferior "Consuls" being simply shadows, he centralised every position of the Government in his own person. The Senate, the Legislative Body, and the Tribunate,—very much like Cromwell's mock-Parliaments,—were his nominees.

As soon as these changes were effected,—in a time so incredibly short that we can only conceive of the process as the concurrent result of youth, genius, and power, aided by the willingness of the French to replace the abortive schemes of the past by anything which gave promise of strength and cohesion,—Napoleon launched his well-organised legions upon unfortunate Austria, which also involved war with Russia. During his absence in the East that Power had come on the stage to meet the danger which now threatened all crowned heads alike. It had assisted Austria to recover her lost ground both in Italy and Switzerland, but the moment the First Consul appeared at the head of his troops all was once more changed. Italy was won again by the First Consul at the battle of Marengo, Bavaria by Moreau at the battle of Hohenlinden; the Rhine and the Adige were to be again the frontiers of France. 1800.

What was Great Britain to do? Her maritime interests demanded two lines of policy, both of which brought her into conflict with other powers besides France, and especially with Russia. She took possession of Malta in order to prevent the French from using the navies of the nations she had conquered to keep the British out of the Mediterranean; and she exercised her ancient belligerent rights against the trade with her enemies which was carried on in neutral bottoms. The first offended the insane Czar Paul, Protector of the Knights of Malta; the second set him upon heading once more, as the Czarina Catherine had in 1780, the Armed Neutrality of the Northern Seas.

It is well to understand the British position, since the Right of Search has been recently given up, and might therefore be supposed indefensible. So far from that, it was strictly accordant with International Law as then understood. Great Britain claimed that the universal law should not be broken against her interests, and that at a moment when its continuance, however displeasing to other nations, could alone enable her to bring the war to a close. Accordingly,

she would hear of no compromise; enforced her rights against all comers, spread her cruisers over every sea, and enormously extended her own commerce. Independently of her rights, it was consistent with the principles of a rough justice that the nation which was spending hundreds of millions in paying the troops of all who opposed the common enemy, should have some means of recouping herself.

CHAPTER XIII.

GEORGE III.—PART VI.

1801. THE year 1801 began, as we have seen, with the temporary difference between the king and Pitt which issued in Pitt's resignation. It has been thought that he might possibly have won over the king to Roman Catholic Emancipation, if he had been open with him in good time; for he had on other occasions persuaded him to relinquish strong prejudices, such as his attachment to Thurlow, his determination to employ the Duke of York as general, and his refusal to treat for peace in 1797; but in forming the Union with Ireland, Pitt had miscalculated not only the king's convictions on the point of his coronation oath, but the settled feeling of the country. He could not have carried his measures in Parliament. The times were not ripe, the suspicion attaching to Jesuitism too strong. The revival of religion in England had been strongly Protestant: even those who approved of the policy could not bring themselves to support it in the midst of a tremendous war. Yet if any minister was necessary to his country Pitt was the man. Nevertheless, unlike Walpole in similar circumstances, he took the more honourable course, and only consented to resume his place when the country once more called him to the helm, as it had called his father at the opening of the Seven Years' War. The resignation drove the poor king into another fit of insanity, and placed at the head of the Government a second-rate statesman, Addington, afterwards Lord Sidmouth. It was now that Pitt,

deeply moved by the king's illness, gave out that he would never press the subject again during his lifetime. So valuable, so necessary, did the good king appear to his subjects, that this was the condition on which even Fox, Tierney, and all ministers after this event accepted office.

Pitt's resignation was followed by two great victories, for which, as in the similar case of his father, he must have the glory. The remains of the French army were completely defeated at Alexandria by the gallant Abercromby, who fell at the moment of victory: and the Armed Neutrality was completely crushed by Nelson at the battle of Copenhagen, one of his very finest exploits. The first had a wide significance for the future. India was thenceforward to be defended, as in 1798 and 1802, through the defence of Turkey and her provinces. With that object Baird led 7000 sepoys from India, who arrived in time to join in the siege of Alexandria; and the precedent has been recently followed. The effect of the second was not only to prevent the Danish fleet from falling into the hands of France, but to convince the Russians that their Emperor was unfit to direct their destinies. Napoleon now for the first time saw the need of peace, and the British were equally ready. Both sides knew well that it was only a truce, but that was better than nothing. Cornwallis, again called to the front, as he was at all critical times before Wellington achieved his fame, was commissioned to make the best terms he could. The Peace 1801.
of Amiens once more saw Great Britain restore all her conquests except Ceylon and Trinidad, and even Malta was to be restored to the Knights under the protection of some third Power not named. The "Seven Islands," of which Corfu was the chief, were to be a Republic; and France relinquished Naples and Rome.

Now it was that the British, so long debarred from continental travel, unsuspectingly rushed abroad in crowds. Now also it was that the nation began to look on Canning as a sort of representative of Burke and Pitt. Ever since the war began he had distinguished himself by turning his literary talents to account in writing down the Revolutionary party. His 'Anti-Jacobin' and Gilray's caricatures are a sort of history of the social politics of the time. On Pitt's birthday in 1802, so enthusiastically observed, Canning's famous song on "The

Pilot that weathered the storm" represented the feeling of the country quite as much as the thanks of Parliament for Pitt's "great and important services," a tribute scarcely ever paid to a minister. But so great a contrast between him and his successor could hardly present itself without friction. Pitt was not without some of his father's arrogance, or at least pride, though he was wholly free from his caprice and theatrical display. This came out in a quarrel with Addington, who was by no means the less acceptable to many because he did not tower so high above them. Yet as week after week of an uneasy peace brought to light some fresh aggression on the part of Napoleon, the national eye fixed itself on the one necessary minister, and the rupture of the Peace soon found him at his post once more.

Napoleon's grand idea was to take the place of Charlemagne in a new Empire of the Franks, embracing, along with Western Germany, the three great nations of the Romance speech—France, Italy, and Spain. But he had learnt a special lesson from Louis XIV., that of utilising a temporary peace to seize as many territories as his enemies would suffer him to grasp without making war. Pretending that the British refusal to evacuate Malta without the stipulated guarantees—a course insisted on by Pitt—justified his proceedings, he seized Switzerland, Elba, and other territories, at the same time publishing in the 'Moniteur' the report of General Sebastiani, whom he had sent to inspect the condition of Turkey and the Levant. He had indeed a grievance in the slowness with which Peltier, his libeller in London, was put on his trial; but the man was at last tried and punished. It was plain that the acquisitions already made were to be followed up by others which would be fatal to the British position in the Mediterranean, and Napoleon's repeated insults to Lord Whitworth, the British ambassador, could be borne no longer. And so, sorrowfully, almost despairingly, Great Britain prepared for war. Vast armaments in all the ports of France and Holland threatened instant disaster, and Napoleon's emissaries had long been pouring into Ireland, of which movement Emmet's rebellion of 1803 was the result. War was declared on May 18 of that year, just fourteen months after the Peace. There was no choice. Even Macaulay admits this war to have been unavoidable.

The nation called on Pitt, but he felt that, unless Prime Minister, he could serve his country better out of office. It was now that he made the magnificent speech which even Fox compared with the orations of Demosthenes, calling on his country to make any and every sacrifice for a war which was forced upon them — an internecine war. The whole country responded; but patriotic enthusiasm might not have had such an effect if it had not been for the general indignation called out by an unheard-of injury—the detention on a ridiculous pretext of some ten thousand British subjects travelling in France. This roused not only the upper class, which chiefly suffered, but the whole people, and injured the French more than the loss of a great battle. Still higher rose the shout of defiance when Napoleon concentrated his vast army at Boulogne, and organised his fleet of flat-bottomed boats. The nation sprang to arms. Pitt and Fox forgot their rivalry, and joined in cheering on the Volunteers. Four hundred thousand of them drilled incessantly; Pitt, as Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, himself superintended his levy of 3000, and the king reviewed 12,000 of them at Windsor. He, his nobles, and his gentry were ready to lead his people to battle, as in ancient times.

The king now insisted on Pitt's resuming office. The perverseness of the Grenvilles prevented him from forming a wide administration, for they would not join him without Fox, and the king, though Pitt earnestly begged him to give way, would not hear of that statesman. The ministry was, therefore, still a Tory ministry, with Canning and Huskisson outside the Cabinet. On the day when Pitt took office (May 18, 1804), Napoleon assumed the title of "Emperor." 1804.
There was no reason why he should not, for he was already an absolute monarch; but the shocking murder of the Duke d'Enghien, the nearest Bourbon he could reach, by way of revenge for the Pichegru conspiracy, was a bad beginning. The melodramatic ceremonies of enthronement at Boulogne, the enormous reviews of troops, and the coronation at Nôtre Dame, were received with ridicule in England, while the French returned the compliment by scoffing at the perpetual drills of the Volunteers. The true defence was, as usual, in the Royal Navy. There was not much real danger from the boats and the soldiers so long as the fleet commanded the

Channel; but yet the task of breaking up the plan, the old plan, which Napoleon was attempting to put in execution, could be intrusted to no one but Nelson. He was sent to blockade the Toulon fleet, so as to prevent its junction with the Brest fleet and the Spaniards, which, once united, were to clear the Channel. In a single week the troops were to cross, and put an end for ever to the absurd presumption, as Napoleon called it, of the one people who crossed his path.

The eventual plan of Napoleon, which Nelson's sagacity detected, was that the Toulon and Cadiz fleets should, after their junction, decoy the English fleet to the West Indies, and by a sudden return carry out their object. "Let us avenge six centuries of insult and shame," wrote the Emperor to Admiral Ganteaume. But the clever combinations which were so often successful on shore were liable to many more derangements at sea than the great general understood, especially when such a genius as Nelson's was concerned in dealing with them. There were many fine admirals at this time, but it may be questioned whether any but Nelson would have taken the responsibility of leaving the Narrow Seas uncovered during the pursuit of the enemy to the West Indies, or have driven him into his last corner as he did.

1805. There is no need to describe the battle of Trafalgar, or the death of the hero. Southey's 'Life' is far from perfect; but it will last as long as the language. It is not too much to say that the word "duty," which Nelson immortalised by his last acts, symbolised, at the highest level to which the sea-service of England had reached, the controlling moral force which had led to glory through so many centuries. In three years from his death the Duke of Wellington was to take up his place as the one great representative of the same principle, and to read the lesson to Europe in still larger letters. To understand his position we must trace the progress of the Napoleonic empire.

The Emperor did not wait for the battle of Trafalgar. Well divining what must be the necessary result of Villeneuve's failure to execute the required combination, he broke up from Boulogne as soon as he heard of it, and set off for Paris on his way to the attack upon Austria. Pitt's coalition of Prussia and Great Britain with that Power

not yet being ripe, it was broken through in a moment, and with consummate skill. Crossing the Rhine at Strasburg on October 1, he placed his army between the Russians and the Austrians, captured the incompetent Mack with his 30,000 men at Ulm, entered Vienna on November 13, and on December 2 destroyed at Austerlitz (near Brunne in Moravia) the united armies of Russia and Austria—the greatest battle as yet fought in Europe. It fell upon Europe with a crushing weight, almost extinguished the memory of Trafalgar, and may be said to have killed Pitt, who died on January 23, 1806. Gloomy presages filled every mind. 1806.
No one saw where light was to spring from. The pillars of the State had suddenly collapsed—Pitt, Nelson, Cornwallis.

The ministry of "All the Talents" succeeded to power—Lord Grenville nominally at the head, and Fox as Foreign Minister; but the last was really chief. It was signalised by a grand civil victory—the Abolition of the Slave-Trade—won at last; but Fox soon discovered that the peace for which he had so often and so factiously clamoured in Opposition was as impossible to him as it had been to Pitt. Even while he was negotiating with Napoleon, the triumphant conqueror was treating with Russia against Great Britain, and, placing himself at the head of what he called "The Confederation of the Rhine," was using every art to foster the differences between Austria and Prussia. The latter, ill-led and alarmed, was robbed of territory, and forced into the anti British alliance; the former, deprived of the Tyrol and of her West-German possessions, was ordered to relinquish the headship of the empire, which the Hapsburgs had held for nearly four centuries. It had become an empty title, but the new Charlemagne would not brook it. In that capacity he now raised his needy brothers to the rank of kings, and rallied round himself as the new centre the smaller German Powers. Francis II. took the title of Emperor of Austria, and from that day (August 6, 1806) the title of emperor has become almost as common as that of king. Napoleon still wanted a title that would befit the head of so many States, and the chafing of Prussia under the insults which he heaped upon her supplied the want. Suddenly rushing upon his prey, he at Jéna, and Davoust at Auerstadt, crushed her to pieces; and from Berlin he issued

his mandates to half Europe by the title of "Emperor of the West." Pursuing the ancient French policy, he now also made common cause with the Poles, a policy sure to embroil him with the other Powers which had partitioned their country.

All these disasters ruined the Grenville Cabinet, which proved itself incapable. Fox died in the same year as Pitt, and was buried by his side; while Lord Grenville was succeeded by the Duke of Portland. Canning, however, as Foreign Secretary, like Fox before him, was the real head, and now devoted himself to the search for some fresh part of Europe from which the British resistance to the French might be made effectual. Subsidies to nations which were already conquered were of course impossible. The attempts upon the South American Republics, as also upon Egypt and Turkey, had signally failed under the Grenville ministry; but a ray of hope shot from an obscure quarter. Under that ministry a small force of British had been landed in South Italy, commanded by Sir John Stuart, who completely
1807. routed General Regnier's French troops at Maida by a resolute bayonet-charge.

All at once it began to be thought that if British soldiers only had fair play the tables might yet be turned. The Emperor of the West himself had, by his conduct towards Spain, pointed out the place where they might perhaps be used with effect; and his "Berlin Decree," which declared the British Isles to be in a state of blockade, secured their inhabitants a goodwill which more than balanced the envy brought on by their prosperous commerce. It professed to exclude from every part of the Continent not only British goods, but every Briton; and this without a navy to enforce the decree—a paper blockade. The Emperor called it the "continental system." The decree was couched in the style of oriental despots, yet never were such decrees more feeble and futile; for it was this very sealing up of Europe, rendering it one vast prison, which, as soon as ever it was accomplished, began to work deliverance. It drove the despairing population to rebellion, and launched the conqueror on the sea of misfortunes in which he was destined to sink. Smuggling soon became universal. The Emperor himself was forced to permit the issue of licences for the

purchase of British goods, and no small part of his own army was clothed in British broadcloth. Thus the liberator presented himself to every family on the Continent as the tyrant who forbade it to enjoy the primary gift of civilisation —the free interchange of goods—and offered to their view Great Britain as the true liberator and benefactor of the human race. Never did power so deliberately overreach itself.

CHAPTER XIV.

GEORGE III.—PART VII.

It could scarcely be wondered at that Napoleon should in this year (1807) be tempted to imitate Alexander the Great in Dryden's immortal ode. He

> "Assumes the god,
> Affects to nod,
> And seems to shake the spheres."

His great victories over Russia at Eylau and Friedland laid at his feet the last Power which could confront him on the Continent. The Czar Alexander found it best to make peace on July 7, on the principle of dividing Europe between the two Powers, and putting an end to the independence of Great Britain and Turkey. Why, said they, should these inferior Powers disturb so beneficent an arrangement? Canning, however, was more than a match for them both. He had learnt that the Danish fleet was to be used against England, and instantly replied to the secret conference between the two emperors at Tilsit by seizing it without a word of notice. For this the Government was shrilly vituperated; but since Denmark was not a free State the justice of the act has long been admitted. It was really a seizure of French ships. In August Napoleon, by way of retaliation, ordered Portugal, which still opened its ports to British commerce, to close them, and the "blockade" was now complete. His next step gave Canning his opportunity. It was nothing more nor less

1807.

than to annex the whole Spanish peninsula to France. For this purpose the Emperor seized its royal family, and poured his troops into both Spain and Portugal. Junot took possession of Lisbon; but not till the Regent of Portugal had, under the protection of a British fleet, migrated to the Brazils with all his family.

Against this gross and unprovoked tyranny the people of Spain uprose, regardless of odds, and reckless of consequences. Now came to the help of Canning's judgment that strong sympathy with popular sentiment which had distinguished him from most of the statesmen of the day. Mad and reckless as the insurrection might be, he saw that Spain might be made the fulcrum of which he was in search for the overthrow of the gigantic fabric which the French had reared. The Peninsula could be reached by British fleets both from the Atlantic and from the Mediterranean; it cut asunder the home resources of France. Its distance from England was not too great for military operations. In that corner of Europe French armies might be detained, and fresh heart might return to the rest of down-trodden Europe. Napoleon himself called the wearing waste of his resources effected by the Peninsular War the "running sore of Spain."

Two or three dates will help us at this stage. On July
1808. 21, 1808, the ill-armed Spaniards won the battle of Baylen over Dupont and his French troops. On August 4, the "Maid of Saragossa" drove off the French besieging army. On August 1, Wellesley's small force had landed in Portugal, and the battles of Roliça and Vimeira, followed by the Convention of Cintra, immediately occurred. The attention of Europe was instantly fixed upon the novel sight of a people rising against the world-conqueror, and upon the adventurous British who had secured a foothold in spite of him. The history of England is now the history of the Peninsular War. It is not a digression to remark that we are for once able to recommend a great history by a competent hand. Napier's 'Peninsular War' ranks as contemporary military history, by a perfectly competent eyewitness, with Thucydides and Cæsar,—as far below them in calm judgment as above them in eloquence, poetic feeling, and multitudinous detail. Here alone are we able to measure the mountains of difficulty which Wellington had to surmount; the corruption and in-

capacity of the Spanish upper and middle classes, the arrogance and folly of their generals, the bombastic pretensions of their officials, the pettiness of their national vanity. Who but a Marlborough or a Wellington could have put up with these things?

To add to these obstructions, Canning and his sanguine agent, Frere, made mistakes in dealing with a people whom they did not yet understand; nor did either Perceval's or Lord Liverpool's Cabinet show any sign of grasping the position which Wellington was taking up. The War Office, the Victualling Office, and the Transport Office, each went its own way; and ships full of stores, which never reached their destination, crowded the Tagus. We are now then to watch the career of the greatest general Great Britain has produced;—treating Sir John Moore's enterprise of 1808 and the Walcheren Expedition of 1809 as episodes. The first was useful both in warning Wellington not to rely too much upon the Spanish troops and generals, and as proving at Corunna what a British army could do when well commanded. The second finally convinced the nation that the sort of officers represented by Lord Chatham could no longer be placed in command, and that no more men or money should be wasted on similar expeditions. Every effort must be concentrated on the Peninsula. Whether Moore could have made good his retreat to Corunna had Napoleon not handed the pursuit over to Soult, may be a question. The Emperor's pretext for leaving his troops was that Austria had already begun to recover spirit, and was preparing to take advantage of the Spanish insurrection. 1808–1814.

Wellington's first object was to free Portugal from the army of Soult, which occupied its northern provinces; Lisbon and the south having been securely held by the British since the Convention of Cintra. Few of his war-strokes were more brilliant than the crossing of the Douro in face of the enemy at Oporto, which forced Soult to beat a hasty retreat into Spain. The English general next marched upon Madrid, not even yet believing but that some aid might be afforded by his Spanish allies. This again proved fallacious. Cuesta could neither help himself nor would he be helped by the British; and as he was thus easily beaten by Marshal Victor, Wellington found himself face to face

1809. with the whole French army at Talavera, with next to no support. In the end, after a doubtful beginning, the small force of Wellington prevailed against about double the number of the French. The victory was however bought with a great loss of men, and involved the necessity of immediate retreat, leaving behind a large body of sick and wounded,—a retreat which had to be made without the supplies of food which had been promised. Disastrous as this was, the moral encouragement given by victory was great, and the fury of Napoleon when he heard the news was no bad index of its importance.

Wellington was now convinced that he must give up all hopes of co-operation, and rely upon himself alone. Both Sir John Moore and he had naturally fixed on Cadiz as the true base of operations, but the Central Junta absolutely refused to allow it. He determined, therefore, to guard at Ciudad Rodrigo and Almeida the northern approach from Spain, and to prepare secretly the lines of Torres Vedras to resist the French attack which he had to expect. Lisbon must serve instead of Cadiz. In speaking, however, of the disappointment caused by the Spanish behaviour, it should be remembered that these gallant people had suffered from bad government for many generations, and it was this which rendered them incapable of effective organisation. Nor should it ever be forgotten that it was their guerilla warfare which ate out the very life of the French armies, a persistent harassing warfare which was provoked by the equally persistent French practice of making war support war. Hence the undying hatred entertained of those who not only stole away their country, but whose presence was a daily and hourly outrage—all the more conspicuous from the contrast presented by the British forces, which paid for everything to those whom they came to save.

The height of moral grandeur was attained by Wellington during the year which elapsed between the battle of Talavera and the Retreat of Masséna, in 1810, from the lines of Torres Vedras. He was shamefully reproached for the evacuation of Spain, which was at once overrun by French troops, he was deserted by the British Government, and attacked by unprincipled politicians,—almost universally by the press. The king alone, old and almost blind, remem-

bering that he had himself stood alone in 1781, and had had no cause to repent of it, insisted that his general should not be discouraged. Having heard Wellington's despatch read, which urged that by war alone, waged at a distance from England, could her independence be secured, the king dictated the following noble letter: "His Majesty trusts that his ministers will feel with him the advantage of suffering Lord Wellington to proceed according to his own judgment and discretion in adherence to the principles which he has laid down, unfettered by any particular instructions which might embarrass him in the execution of his general plan of operations." — (Wellington's Supplementary Despatches, vi. 515.) When George III. could even now take so great and so wise a share in affairs of state, it is not surprising that his Jubilee, celebrated with every circumstance of joy in 1809, carried the whole nation with it. It was the last flicker of the lamp so soon to be extinguished. 1809.

Perhaps the failure of the Walcheren Expedition, and the scandal of the duel between Canning and Castlereagh which ensued, brought home to the country more than anything else the merits of the Peninsular campaigns. But this was a slow process, while the policy of the Emperor of the West seemed to a superficial view triumphant. Great Britain, unable to save Spain, or make any impression on the French in the Low Countries, had been forced to look on while the German Powers were being completely enslaved. In 1808 Napoleon had made a grand imperial demonstration at Erfurt, where the Czar met him, and where his co-operation was bought by the renewed promise of Wallachia and Moldavia. Here also he pretended to offer peace to the British, but no one dreamt of considering it serious. Austria was the only country which still considered it possible to recover its freedom. Once more it gallantly uprose, and in 1809, with the brave Archduke Charles at the head of its armies, challenged the conqueror to battle. No sooner however did Napoleon appear in person than he took Vienna; but he found in the Archduke almost his match. Shut up in the Island of Lobau, in the midst of the Danube, after fighting two desperate battles at Aspern and Esling, the Emperor did indeed break out, and win a great victory at Wagram, but at such a tremendous loss that he found it best

to make peace. Austria's losses were still greater, and she had to relinquish a great extent of territory that Napoleon might form the new French Government of the "Illyrian Provinces," as well as to endure the shocking degradation of seeing her conqueror crush the Tyrol and execute the gallant Hofer. He then proceeded to seize the Pope and the Papal States, and to incorporate Holland with France.

The salvation of Europe was not to come from these quarters. A cloud arose in Russia, where Alexander's eyes were opened, not so much by the subjugation of Germany, as by a nefarious domestic transaction of the new Charlemagne. The consort who had ably assisted him in his rise from obscurity to greatness was no longer to share the throne of the world. The faithful Josephine was divorced in order that he might ally himself with the ancient House of Hapsburg, and that from Maria Louisa might proceed a dynasty which should hold together the whole centre and west of Europe. His seizure at the same time of Oldenburg and West Galicia, as well as the attitude now assumed by the Poles, convinced the Czar that he must at last begin to change his policy and assert his independence.

It was this growing hostility of Russia which led Napoleon rapidly up to the fatal invasion of 1812. The cloud, how-
1810. ever, was scarcely visible in 1810, nor did any one perhaps but Wellington himself guess that the other cloud in which he was himself enveloped in the extreme west was about to spread over the Spanish Peninsula and Southern France. Still less perhaps was it noticed that Prussia, with the practical instincts of her people, was only abstaining from rising against her conqueror because her great national leaders, Stein and Hardenberg, perceived how much was to be done before such a rising could be successful. Under their inspiration the antiquated feudal system of land and of servitude was abolished, and the serfs emancipated. The peasant proprietors became free tenants, and the towns were enfranchised. To Scharnhorst was due the system of short service and regular drafting into the reserves which soon turned the people into a nation of soldiers, and enabled them to return with interest the injuries they had received.

In the present day we find it less easy than it was formerly to understand the common remark that the lines of Torres

Vedras turned the scale against Napoleonism in the west. Without entering into detail we may say just as much as this. The hilly country which lies between the Tagus and the sea was turned into a vast fortress by means of three distinct lines of fortification, each some miles behind the other. The last was to cover the embarkation of the army, if forced to take the sea. Each had its own magazines; and a code of signals was arranged by which the whole army could be concentrated at any point on short notice. The Portuguese force was now sufficiently drilled to be trusted for the defence of some of these immense works; and as soon as Masséna, the best of the French marshals, showed signs of intending to invade Portugal, Wellington retreated within them, bringing with him the people of the district on the line of march and their supplies. Masséna unsuspiciously swept on, undeterred by his losses at the battle of Busaco; but soon found there was nothing on which to feed his troops. What was his astonishment when he first discovered the well-kept secret, and that his starving army had been caught in a trap. In the course of the ignominious retreat to which he was forced, he lost 30,000 men, and was disgraced by his enraged master. Portugal was thus set free, and the victor was ready to invade Spain. The consequences were soon apparent. The unworthy opposition in England to the Peninsular War sank away, and the crushed peoples of the Continent took heart. All through the year 1811 preparations for a united struggle, which should be final, were in progress, and as usual Great Britain was quite understood to be the one independent Power whose inexhaustible resources, when the day came, would be distributed throughout the mass.

Once more the British stood in the way of the Emperor of the West, just as they had barred his progress so often before. His wisest plan, had it been possible, would have been to take command of his Spanish armies, and attempt to dispose of Wellington at once. But he held too many threads in his hand, and felt that enslaved Europe might rise while he was shut up in Spain. It was too great a risk. He could not be sure it would be a short campaign, and unless it were short he was lost: so he resolved to deal first with Russia, and settle afterwards with Great Britain.

The year of Torres Vedras (1810) was also marked by the

final mental seizure of George III., which was brought on by the illness and death of his favourite daughter, the Princess Amelia. This time the Prince Regent filled his father's place continuously, while the queen was responsible for the charge of his person and household. We come then to what was the real conclusion of the reign of one of the best kings and truest patriots England has ever boasted. Enough has been said of the part he took at the various crises of the reign. Enough cannot be said of the grateful sense entertained by his people of the services he had performed for them. They learned to love even his little eccentricities of style and manner. They profoundly pitied him in his old age and loneliness, under the disease which had been contracted in the cause of duty. They mourned at his death in 1820 like children for a father; and all the more from the contrast presented by his eldest son. His good queen had her full share in the popular veneration; for she also had done her duty as a queen, a wife, and a mother was expected to do it by the British people.

CHAPTER XV.

THE REGENCY.

1811. THE Regent's accession to the place of his deranged father made no difference as to the war. As his Whig friends were quarrelling amongst themselves, he had recourse at last to his father's Cabinet; and when in 1812 Mr Perceval was assassinated, he turned to Lord Liverpool, who headed the Tory Ministry for fifteen years. To Wellington the year 1811 turned out to be, as to the Continent generally, a year of waiting and preparation. He was still starved for war-supplies, while Soult and Masséna had been largely reinforced. He was indeed still able to keep the French out of Portugal, but that was owing to Soult's jealousy of his brother marshals and determination to possess himself of the south-western provinces of Spain. Their threatening attitude involved Wellington in the necessity of fighting two battles,

both of which he won, though at great loss to his army. The victory of Fuentes d'Onor over Masséna's largely superior force saved Almeida, and enabled the victor to commence the siege of Badajos: that of Albuera, almost lost by Beresford who was in command, and saved by Hardinge, drove off Soult into Southern Spain. In Napier's spirited account of each of these battles respectively, appear the eloquent passages which have become part of the stock-property of the English language. The army had already become, as their general said, ready "to go anywhere and do anything." Still we can hardly suppose that this handful of troops, without any siege-materials, could have achieved the astonishing success which was in store for them, had it not been that precisely when Wellington was ready to advance upon Spain the French army, which consisted of 370,000 foot and 50,000 horse, began to suffer a slow paralysis from Napoleon's Russian War.

In May 1812 the Russian ambassador demanded the withdrawal of the French troops from Pomerania and from Warsaw. There had been abundance of warning, and Napoleon was more than ready. He answered the challenge by crossing the Niemen on June 24 with some half-million of troops, drawn not only from France, but from the subject nations of his empire,—Italians, Poles, and Rhenish Germans, along with great bodies of Austrians and Prussians, whose unwilling presence by the side of their conquerors is the best proof of the condition to which the Continent was reduced. Here were once more the motley legions of Xerxes, drawn from all parts of a continent, advancing to crush the obstinate people who preferred death and the ruin of their homes to slavery. It has been called "the storm of nations," sweeping like a tornado from west to east. The Russians, with the recklessness of courage and despair, had made up their minds how to deal with an invasion which no battles nor even victories could arrest. Their plan was to allure them into the recesses of their vast territory, and when at last the starving troops had reason to believe they had found food and shelter, to burn the cities over their heads, let it cost what it might. So perished Smolensk, and Moscow, the grand old capital of Russia. Then Napoleon found he had no choice but to retreat, and 1812.

the awful battle of the Borodino, which he had won at the cost of 40,000 men slain on each side, served him no better than if it had been a defeat. We pass over the exceeding horrors of the famous Retreat, the desertion of his wretched army by its general, and the miserable state in which the poor wreck of his half-million troops arrived in Germany. All this is told in a hundred books. It was the death-knell of the French Empire.

Freed from the overpowering presence of the legions, now starved and frozen, the East German nations rose in arms, and joined the advance of the avenging Russian army, already rolling on upon the plains of Saxony. Even Austria, which had been hampered by the marriage of its Archduchess with Napoleon, broke off her bonds at the news of Wellington's victory at Vittoria, and joined the army of liberation, banded together by the help of British subsidies, while Wellington held a firm grip upon the French army on the Spanish frontier. Before, however, Austria had joined the Russians and Prussians, Napoleon, calling upon France for her last levies, had rushed upon his enemies at Lutzen and Bautzen, and won victories which he was too feeble to follow up. His best soldiers were gone. In desperation he now threw his whole force on Dresden to prevent the junction of Austria, and after losing two minor battles by the hands of Bernadotte and Blucher, won the great battle of Dresden over the whole of the united forces of his enemies. It was the last success of this astonishing man. With indomitable spirit the Allies nevertheless closed up, and won easy victories over Vandamme and Ney. Prince Schwartzenberg now took the command of the Allies, with Blucher for his right hand;
1813. and Napoleon met his fate at Leipsic, on October 8, 1813. The "Battle of the Nations" lasted for three days, with immense losses on both sides; but in the end Napoleon was overmatched and decisively defeated.

The end was at hand. Now at last the Rhenish Germans found their time had arrived, and rising as one man, Europe once more recovered her ancient landmarks. The petty kingdoms of mushroom growth were at once abolished, and Bernadotte, now King of Sweden, received Norway in exchange for Pomerania, which once more became German, and was finally assigned to Prussia. It was necessary for her

organisation in the form of a powerful kingdom. These successes were accompanied by Wellington's steady movement upon South France; and the Allies, not without much hesitation, determined to continue their advance upon Paris in spite of winter, thus giving their enemy no time to rally. This resolution soon justified itself. Napoleon had used up his reserves. The Congress of Chatillon offered to let him retain his crown and the Rhine frontier—a dangerous concession, which, however, he himself disposed of by demands absurd under the circumstances. It was his last chance; the Allies were close upon Paris, and his marshals forced him to abdicate (April 14, 1814). 1814.

Before we discuss the treaties of Paris and Vienna or the Hundred Days, it is necessary to take up again the Peninsular War. Its influence on the final struggle was important. As Wellington gradually drove the French out of Spain, and conquered South France, the Allies were relieved from all pressure in that direction; Soult, the best of the marshals, was kept fully employed; and the one general who had proved himself a match for the French was brought before the Allies at a critical moment for diplomacy, and, as it turned out, for the renewed war.

In 1812 Wellington found himself able to advance, and 1812.
his career now gives us one continuous record of victories. After a series of masterly manœuvres on the Spanish frontier, he took Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajos by storm under the very eyes of the French marshals, and in July obtained the decisive victory of Salamanca over Marmont. He then marched upon Madrid, and this time took it. Once more, however, threatened by the French armies in his rear, he was forced to retreat; but now, pivoting upon the two great fortresses which placed the frontier in his hands, this basis really gave him a better strategical position for his final operations. The guerilla warfare of the Spaniards began to tell disastrously upon the French. They could not only obtain no reinforcements; there was a perpetual, though gradual, drain upon their armies, and they began to fear for their communications with France. Still further, a small English force, commanded by Maitland, had landed at Alicant to make a diversion, and another in North Spain under Popham. Encouraged by all these signs of vantage, Wellington laid siege

to Burgos, which, if taken, would have forced the French to evacuate Spain even sooner than they did. Here, however, from the entire want of proper siege materials, which had already cost him in the other sieges such heavy losses in men, he failed, and fell back to watch the enemy at Ciudad Rodrigo.

He had not to wait long. Various risings threatened the French from Northern Spain, and King Joseph, with his whole army, baggage, and spoils, set out for France in full retreat. At Vittoria they were caught by Wellington, their retreat cut off, and the whole force hopelessly beaten and
1813. scattered on June 21, 1813. One hundred and fifty guns, 5½ millions of treasure, and the archives containing Napoleon's secret correspondence, rewarded the victors. We have noticed the effect of this great victory, which laid France open to the British arms, upon the spirit of the Allies during their fearful struggle with Napoleon. The Emperor now sent his best general, Soult, to protect the French frontier; and he showed his sagacity in selecting him, for his defence was quite the best feat of arms performed by the French throughout the Spanish campaign. From Bayonne he rushed fiercely upon Wellington, and, though uniformly beaten in the three battles of the Pyrenees, fought near Roncesvalles and Pampeluna, he never flinched from the encounter. The great fortress of St Sebastian stopped the career of victory for two months, for it could not be left in the rear. The siege of that place, made famous by Napier, cost Wellington 3000 men. On August 31, 1813, it was stormed; but it was yet six months before the conqueror fought his way, river by river, town by town, till he finally vanquished Soult at Toulouse. Unknown to both armies Napoleon had, before the last battle was fought, abdicated his crown.

1814. By the Treaty of Paris (May 30, 1814), the Allies placed Louis XVIII., next brother to Louis XVI., on the French throne. To Napoleon was assigned the sovereignty of Elba, with a sufficient revenue. France received back her old boundaries of 1789 intact. Great Britain, as usual, relinquished nearly all her conquests,—Malta, Mauritius, and the Cape being the only exceptions of any importance, besides the Ionian Islands, Heligoland, Malacca, the two insignificant West India islands, Tobago and St Lucia, and the torrid

swamps of Demerara and Essequibo. Her compensations were that the seaboard of the Low Countries was at any rate delivered from a hostile occupation, and Italy was restored to the government of princes independent of France. With Malta for a centre, which the British could not be accused of taking from any other Power, an impregnable Gibraltar, and a friendly Italy, the Mediterranean was safe for that branch of her trade, and the protectorate of Turkey naturally fell into her hands. Speaking generally, Great Britain was satisfied that the Peace secured her the five requisites for her empire,—the safety of her commerce, of her dependencies, and of her own shores, the balance of European Powers, and their concerted action.

It was not till a little later that the other war in which Great Britain had been unhappily engaged since 1812, the war with the United States of America, was brought to an end. It had sprung out of the refusal of the British to relinquish the Right of Search which they had hitherto exercised over neutral vessels on the High Seas, both for contraband goods and for their seamen. These seamen, trained to war in British fleets, no longer found sufficient employment at home, and were attracted to the ships of the United States by high pay. It is plain after the event that this claim should have been compromised; but, as in the war of separation, British statesmen neglected to observe that the difficulties in dealing with people of their own race across an ocean were far greater than those which presented themselves in their immediate neighbourhood. At first the successes on land were fairly balanced; but the capture of British frigates by American frigates of a very superior size, weight of metal, and number of crew, astonished a world which had been accustomed to British supremacy, more than it ought. That was soon put an end to by the famous duel of the Shannon and Chesapeake. On land the reverses sustained in the invasion of the northern parts of the States were balanced by the British capture of Washington—a success tarnished by the destruction of the public buildings in that capital—and by the failure of the American invasion of Canada; but the defeat of the Peninsular veterans at New Orleans left the balance of success on the side of the States. Both countries were, however, glad to make peace. The collapse of Napoleon left the

1812.

1814.

British free; and the American credit, as well as its commerce, were most seriously damaged. Nothing more was said about the grievances out of which the war had arisen.

It was well for the future of Europe that the Duke of Wellington was free to deal with the great questions which divided the Allies at the Congress of Vienna. Such a profound agitation could not but leave its mark. Already the voice of Great Britain had been raised against Russia and Prussia on the fundamental point of the partition of France, and she was left unpartitioned at the Peace of Paris. The quarrel had long since ceased to be with her people; it had been a war against the common enemy of mankind. The Duke now represented France and Austria, as well as his own country, against the further claims to aggrandisement made by the other two Powers. Rather than allow Saxony to be absorbed by Prussia, and Poland by Russia, they were prepared to go to war. Wiser counsels, however, prevailed. A compromise was effected which gave Russia and Prussia a part of their claims; and a plan of uniting Germany, under the Presidency of Austria, in a body of thirty-eight members, styled the "German Confederation," was adopted for the future defence of the Teutonic Powers. This was too theoretical to last, and has broken down in recent times. Switzerland was once more declared an independent State.

At this stage of its proceedings, the Congress was rudely interrupted. All discordant notes were hushed at the tremendous news that Napoleon had broken loose from Elba, and
1815. had landed at Cannes on March 1, 1815.

The "Hundred Days" saw the instant flight of the restored Bourbons, the rapid muster in Belgium of British and Prussians, Hanoverians, Dutch, and Belgians,—any troops, however raw, which could be assembled at a moment's notice,—the extraordinary success of Napoleon in rallying round his standard for his last desperate struggle his old troops, the tardy movements of the Allies, who had been completely taken by surprise, and the masterly rush of the Emperor to place himself between the British and the Prussians before they could join their forces. Vigorous as his movements then and always were, his troops were overmatched by those of Great Britain and Prussia on the plains of Waterloo, and himself by Wellington. He had lost time

on the march, and was quite unable to keep the two sections of his enemies from making a junction towards the evening of the 18th of June; and this junction decided the battle of giants. It had been raging all day between the French and British with varying fortunes; but Wellington knew he could trust Blucher and the Prussians who formed his reserve, and was not disappointed. Napoleon had no reserves, and shattered his last troops to pieces in a final desperate charge upon the British line, with no result but to be driven back in headlong rout to Paris, pursued by the furious Prussians.

Once more the conquered general was forced to abdicate, and to throw himself on the humanity of the British, as the people whom his tyranny had outraged somewhat less than the rest. He could expect nothing else, after his escape from Elba, than to undergo a vigilant detention at some safer and more distant place. St Helena had been agreed upon by the Allies before the Congress broke up. This was undeniably just; but it was unfortunate that the wrong sort of man was selected for the charge of the prisoner. Though Napoleon's behaviour and that of his suite was bad, a more high-minded man than Sir Hudson Lowe might have discharged his trust in a manner which would have satisfied the world. Only one thing was required, that the insane ambition which had been the scourge of Europe should never again find an opportunity. That at least was achieved, but the process is painful to contemplate.

The great battle of Waterloo was the fitting close of a grand, all-embracing, sanguinary drama which it had taken twenty-six years to unfold,—a drama which had brought upon the stage every nation of the Continent, and affected every part of the world at that time in contact with civilisation. From this widespread convulsion dates a new era in history. It is because the period occupies so great a place in comparison with what preceded and has followed it, that so many chapters have been devoted to its consideration. We have now to trace the results and consequences of these great events, as they showed themselves within the British Isles. But it would be as great a mistake to imagine that the world, or at any rate the British portion of it, stood still gazing at the drama, as if we failed to give it its due importance. Of a considerable part of the Continent the metaphor

might be in some sense appropriate, but not across the Channel. The abounding progress, at which we briefly glanced in describing Pitt's earlier administration, was for a long time irrepressible. The population doubled. New towns or suburbs sprang up. Wealth circulated in all classes. England became, as we have said, the workshop and emporium of the world. There was not only a nautical supremacy to insure safety, but a people prepared by the education of ages to make use of it. We shall see that this progress became too rapid, and required the check which it received.

In no direction was the vigorous life of the nation more apparent than in that of literature. The ploughing up of the British mind, so to speak, which the American revolt and the French Revolution had effected, enabled it to bear harvests of original thought and expression, which astonish us now even more than it surprised our ancestors. All this is familiar enough. We still revel in the poetry of Scott, Byron, Campbell, Shelley, Wordsworth, Burns, Coleridge, and Keats, though we may perhaps have forgotten too much Cowper and Crabbe, Rogers and Moore. The immortal prose works of Scott still stand, like Shakespeare's works, unapproachable in their majesty in spite of the multitudes of his followers who, with "panting Time, toil after him in vain." The 'Quarterly' and the 'Edinburgh,' which rose at the beginning of the century to the leadership of the literary world, are not even yet deposed. The prose of Southey, Lamb, Jane Austen, and Fanny Burney still lifts its head above the flood of literature which has set in by the agency of the steam printing-press through the open flood-gates of education. It is surely not too much to say that the "Age of George III." takes rank in its literature with that of Elizabeth and Anne, as it undoubtedly exceeds those ages in the greatness of its statesmen, discoverers, and warriors by land and sea.

It would be unreasonable to neglect in this brief summary one other great factor in the national progress. The Wesleyan revival of religion in the reign of George II. affected the whole Church of England in that of George III. It showed itself in various ways—in morals first of all, in literature, and in public spirit, amongst clergy and laity, in

town and country, in the education of the poor, in the discouragement of barbarous sports, in charitable works, in missionary enterprise. The good king and queen set a noble example both in their court and outside of it. Dr Johnson talked down and wrote down irreligion; Mrs Montagu and the *bas bleus* frowned it down. By-and-by Wilberforce and his school, male and female, largely influenced the upper classes for good. The pulpits no longer emitted so many somniferous discourses. The "lamp of sacrifice" was lit; and though men sighed for peace, they nerved themselves for war, and gloried in their cause. Even in the very heat of the struggle we saw that the country found time to carry at last the Abolition of the African Slave-Trade.

CHAPTER XVI.

GREAT BRITAIN FROM 1815 TO 1837.—PART I. (PART OF GEORGE IV.'S REGENCY AND HIS REIGN).

1815–1837.

THIS period of twenty-two years presents a somewhat confused aspect as generally treated. It is best to regard it as a whole, as a distinct period of gradual change from the aristocratic forms of government under which Great Britain had won and defended her modern empire, to a popular form, under which it seemed to the generation then in power that she was very likely to lose it. Under each of the two sons of the old king in succession, though in different ways, the Crown still found itself able to exercise considerable power; but the limits of that power were absolutely laid down by the democracy — a democracy still indeed of an aristocratic type. The House of Lords shared with the Crown the loss of governing weight, and the House of Commons rose upwards in proportion. It became at last a representative body, and took the lead in every contest.

This was a new state of things. The reign of Queen Victoria has afforded a wonderful spectacle of how much can be accomplished by tact and patience to keep the Con-

stitution in working order under these circumstances. It may be fairly held to have succeeded in establishing the new relations between its parts, so that the weaker powers should be retained in sufficient strength to act as drags upon the wheels of a too rapid progress, and if emergency arose, perhaps to save the country.

1828–1833. The five years from 1828 to 1833 form a great historical landmark, the central point of the period before us, signalised by the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, the Emancipation of the Roman Catholics, and the first Reform Bill. They were the result of ceaseless agitation, which began soon after the Peace, and sometimes verged upon civil war; but it was an unavoidable agitation, consequent upon the vast increase of population, the social changes produced by the prolonged war, and the long-suppressed impatience of the middle and lower classes under their practical exclusion from a share of the government. It was intelligible that they must wait till the war was over; but the war was over, and Reform did not come. In short, the swollen stream of democracy could no longer be restrained; but channels for the overflow, so to speak, were already cut, and by the end of the period in hand, were carrying it off, so that the land was fertilised instead of being submerged by floods. By that time a wholesome party government, under the new relations of political forces, was in full operation. The same remarks apply to the reforms of the Church, which were also loudly demanded, but only partially effected. Here also it may be said that nothing was lost in the process which was really worth keeping.

The usual way of treating the agencies by which these gradual changes were effected has been to condemn with contemptuous bitterness the ministers who resisted, and laud with intemperate eulogy those who persevered in the path of Reform. At this distance of time we can judge more fairly. The honours of patriotism must be equally divided if we assume to rise above mere partisanship. During the Regency and the subsequent reign of George IV., the Government remained in the hands of those who had held office during the great war. Lord Liverpool, Canning, Lords Castlereagh, Eldon, and Lyndhurst, above all, the Duke of Wellington, who was often, before he became Premier, a sort of dictator

behind the Government, had inherited the anti-Reform policy, and considered the dangers to which the nation was exposed after the Peace to be as conclusive against Reform as those which forbade it in time of war. The position of Great Britain had to be sustained in the midst of serious perils, such as the Holy Alliance, and against the ambitious designs of Russia upon Turkey, of France upon Spain, and of Spain upon Portugal. Great Britain, in consequence of the events of the last years, had come to hold the proud but harassing place of Protector of the Settlement, and at any moment might be called upon to act as such with all her force. Was it safe, said the Tories, to meddle with the political machinery which had carried the ship of State safe through the storm? Was it safe to allow the people to depend on their neighbours for food-supply? Was not that to give up all she had been contending for? Was not the agricultural interest the true basis of domestic strength?

Of these rulers Canning, Pitt's favourite pupil and friend, was by far the ablest, and the man who left the broadest mark. To him the foreign policy which destroyed Napoleon had been chiefly due. He was a man of the people, and diligently cultivated their sympathies, but he hated mobs, and refused to believe that the time had arrived for allowing them to influence the course of affairs. Thus he was dead against the Reform of Parliament. How was his Majesty's Government to be carried on?—this was the question with him, as it was that of the great Duke.

Happily for the nation the discredited Whigs, who for nearly half a century had been reduced to impotence, took up the popular demand for Reform, with the great Whig noblemen for leaders, and Cobbett as the mouthpiece of the people. There might be dangers, they argued, but they must be faced. The situation could not be prolonged. The position was not unlike in principle what with the ancient Romans was called the demand for a new "Agrarian Law," a fresh redistribution of the national deposit. Never was the answer to such a cry from unrepresented classes more wisely given. There were to be no violent changes, no injustice, but simply the old English remedy, a proper representation of the people in Parliament. That new Parliament should fight it out. If one party went too far, the other should take its place.

The actual process of the movement, its preliminary throes and convulsions, were however painful enough. The violent political clubs, the mob-meetings, the mistakes made in the mode of repressing them, the abortive insurrections, the State-trials,—all this presented a sad spectacle, and coming, as it did, together with the national grief universally felt at the death of the people's favourite, the youthful Princess Charlotte, in 1817, formed a miserable sequel to the wild joy of the nation so vividly expressed at the glorious close of the war. That untimely death however caused the immediate marriage of the Duke of Kent, fourth son of George III., a prince whose good qualities never had fair play; and in the place of the Princess, the nation received, in 1819, the gift of their future Queen. What this gift signified the nation now knows well; but it could not then guess. What it did feel was that the Prince Regent carried no respect for his crown. After a turbulent, and for the most part scandalous, youth and manhood, passed politically as well as privately in opposition to his revered father, he had turned round to the Tories, and supported their resistance to the popular movement. His unpopularity was still further increased by his distressing relations with the lady whom he had unfortunately married. When the old king died in 1820, their deadly quarrel became the absorbing subject of interest, for she determined to be properly recognised and crowned. She now became the popular favourite, not so much from any chivalrous sentiment,—for her too-obvious faults were repulsive enough,—but because all the glowing elements of disgust and discontent with the king and his ministers could be conveniently gathered round her name. The Reform movement was greatly aided by these impulses, and became irresistible.

The two great foreign events of the Regency were the break-up of the Mohammedan power which had so long dominated the north coast of Africa, and the evacuation of France by the allied troops. The happy audacity of Lord Exmouth,
1816. displayed at the battle of Algiers in 1816, put an end to a long history of Christian degradation and disgrace. It was by the advice of the great Duke that the last mark of con-
1818. quest was removed from France in 1818, and those long suspended pacific relations commenced, which have happily prevailed ever since.

The directing hand of Canning was felt much more in George IV.'s reign than in his Regency. During that earlier time his quarrels with Castlereagh, his opinions in favour of the Roman Catholic claims, and the strength of the unbending Tories, with whom he had only limited sympathies, had combined to keep him out of the first place. Thus he was forced to accept offices which were inferior to his acknowledged position. In 1816 he was Envoy Extraordinary to Lisbon, and in 1822 he was actually about to proceed to India as Governor-General, when Castlereagh committed suicide. He now became Foreign Secretary, and in 1827 was for a few months Prime Minister. Soon after that he died at the age of fifty-seven. 1822–1827.

It was in relation to British foreign policy that Canning left his chief mark. It was he who established the normal position of his country, or, more strictly, the great principles which she was to represent in relation to other countries during the remainder of the century. Great Britain was not to interfere in the internal affairs of her neighbours; and at the same time she was to prevent her weaker neighbours from being interfered with. Thus, as she had withstood the "Holy Alliance" of Austria, Russia, and Prussia, so Canning used all his power to prevent Turkey from crushing Greece. So also when France was intent on once more conquering Spain, and seizing her revolted colonies, Canning hastened to acknowledge the independence of those colonies; or in his own famous words, he "called in the New World to redress the balance of the Old." In effect, as the great treaties had been made to secure the Balance of Power, and the honourable co-operation of the Great Powers in keeping the peace, he determined that Europe should not lose the benefit by default on the part of Great Britain. Thus the continued efforts of the Holy Alliance to enforce absolutism in Europe having been resolutely met or pushed aside, the nations found time to recover from the Napoleonic wars, and to redress the wrongs to which bad government had exposed them.

That Canning's Premiership, following on the death of Lord Liverpool, was short, and his death the consequence of the bitter political struggle in which he was involved during that time, may be reckoned as the natural consequence of the very free use he had made all through life of

his brilliant satirical talents. His death was not so untimely as it seemed. Had he lived, the Roman Catholic Emancipation of 1829 might, indeed, possibly have been hastened by a year, and might not have been carried, as it was, under the unwholesome dread of civil war; but he could never have guided the country through a Reform of Parliament which he had spent his life in resisting, and, during the convulsion of the war, not unwisely resisting. That Reform was to be carried in the true English way, by the growing strength of the Reformers, and the not dishonourable defeat of the Tories. New formations of party were required to suit the new phase of the Constitution.

This leads us to the rise of the new statesmen by whom the battle was to be fought. In the decade with which we are now dealing (1820–1830), Peel and Huskisson had moved up into the front rank. Peel, representing the Tory side of Canning's policy, was preparing to take his place. Huskisson had been his chief Liberal ally in removing commercial restrictions, and carrying forward internal reforms of various kinds, a policy which had been a very distinct adumbration of free trade. Nor should we in parting with this great man forget that by the mitigation of slavery in the British colonies, Canning had laid a strong foundation for the emancipation of slaves which was soon to follow. Like his life, his death marked the course of events. It was the signal for the advance, both of the political freedom of the Roman Catholics, who had till now been seeking his support and would wait no longer, and for the Reform of Parliament, which, now he was gone, none of his successors were strong enough to resist. It fell to the Duke of Wellington, who, after a short interval, was forced by the king, and, indeed, by public opinion, to become Premier, to guide the country through the crisis.

The policy of the Duke is not to be judged altogether by common rules. He found himself installed, as already said, in the position of a quasi-dictator. His own opinions were opposed to the changes which the mass of the nation were now demanding; but he held that his duty was not to let them stand in the way, not to resign if his Government was beaten, but to be the judge when resistance was vain. No one but the Duke could have accepted a position which was

so unconstitutional; nor could even he hold it longer than was absolutely necessary for the public good. Nothing else could have preserved the party of resistance from being obliterated in the unequal struggle; nothing else have enabled it to make a decent retreat under cover of their great representative. Thus the Duke gave way to Lord John Russell's Bill for the Repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts in 1828, as soon as ever it obtained a large majority in the House of Commons, and in this way at last the Nonconformists were brought up in line politically with the members of the Established Church. So also next year, when a decided majority of the House declared, under the leading of O'Connell and the Whigs, for Roman Catholic Emancipation, he would allow neither the king's scruples nor his own objections to stand in the way; for he saw that the next phase of the resistance would be civil war. Political freedom had been too long delayed already to render further resistance safe. Plainly enough it was foreseen that the Irish agitation which had been so powerful would not stop there, and O'Connell at once proceeded to demand the Repeal of the Union; but the country had made up its mind that all such consequences must be dealt with on their merits. Lastly, when the new French Revolution of 1830 once more set fire to combustible materials in all the neighbouring States, the Duke, though no longer Premier, guided the new king and the Tory party into a similar compliance with the now irresistible cry for the Reform of Parliament, and saved the Constitution without that drastic operation of swamping the House of Lords which occupied our attention in the reign of Queen Anne. Happy the nation which in such emergencies can command the services of such a man.

The one great foreign event of the reign of George IV. was the battle of Navarino in 1827, gained by Sir Edward Codrington over the Turks, his fleet being accompanied by a few French and Russian ships. The Duke, who succeeded Canning as Premier in 1828, pronounced it an "untoward event," and it will never lose that title. Canning's complicated and delicate, but sagacious, policy was an extremely difficult one to pursue in practice when the poet Byron represented the heart of the British people in their sympathy for Greece, and the gallant Codrington their right arm. The

1827.

1828.

Greeks were not to be crushed by the Turks, but neither were the Turks to be crushed by Russia. Yet this battle destroyed the Turkish navy, and laid the Black Sea open to Russian designs. We have watched the process by which Great Britain became the protector of Turkey, and how the "Eastern Question," in its relation to India and Egypt, had come to centre in the Levant. The Duke had special grounds of displeasure, for he had himself been sent by Canning to use his influence in favour of Turkey at the Russian Court; and it is worthy of remark that the influence of his great name and high character was so powerful that the Czar made no attempt to pursue the resolute designs of his family upon Constantinople till after his death.

But after all, it may be said that the "untoward event" was only a temporary inconvenience, inasmuch as Great Britain, committed on this occasion to a more decided action than her Government intended, found herself, at each subsequent crisis, obliged to accept and maintain the position thus acquired. At Acre in 1840, at Sebastopol in 1854, and at Alexandria in 1884, she has reluctantly acted a chief part when she would willingly have co-operated with the rest of the great Powers. But the result has been beneficial. Though unable to reform and protect the Turkish empire, the disintegration of its unwieldy mass has not been proceeding for the sole benefit of Russia, as was certainly the case up to the date of the Peace of Kainardji in 1774. During the century which has elapsed since the Eastern Question took its present shape nearly all the Christian nations which had formerly bowed to the Turkish yoke have become independent, and the protection of what still remains of the Turkish empire is no longer the perilous and onerous burden of Great Britain alone, but has become, under skilful diplomacy, the joint concern of the Great Powers.

CHAPTER XVII.

GREAT BRITAIN FROM 1815 TO 1837.—PART II. (WILLIAM IV., 1830–1837).

In the midst of the new French Revolution, which substituted the bourgeois government of Louis Philippe for the absolutism of Charles X., George IV. died. Though unable to retard, much less to stem, the progress of the Reform movement, his death was opportune. It was a happy circumstance that while the Princess Victoria was being educated for her future duties by the best of mothers, the throne was filled by the one of her uncles who was on the whole best fitted for the difficult position in which the Crown was placed. It was easy to see the faults and defects of the Sailor-King, but he had breathed a freer atmosphere than his elder brothers; his nautical style was popular with the country; and he showed himself possessed of some distinctly good political qualities.

The Government of the Duke of Wellington could not be expected to survive for any length of time the death of George IV., who had placed him in office for a temporary purpose. The great mass of the middle and lower classes, represented by Lord Grey in the Upper, and Lord John Russell in the Lower House, had come to an agreement upon the terms of Reform, a Reform of by no means an extreme kind; and the country was more than ripe for it,—it could only be a question of months. As soon, then, as the new Parliament came in, the Duke went out; but too many persons were committed, too many interests involved, to pass so great a measure, even though a foregone conclusion, without troubles of a very serious kind, aggravated by the influence of the revolutionary spirit revived abroad, and the treasonable agitation fanned by O'Connell in Ireland. The violent and unguarded language used by both sides on the Reform question led to a general loosening of social ties. A disgraceful series of rick-burnings and seditious meetings was met by a desperate resistance which was far from senseless — for reform and revolution seemed to be marvellously akin. Patriotic men were unable to take a calm view. Resistance to seditious movements had saved the country under George III.—why

not under William IV.? Had Englishmen lost their ancient courage? That Grey and Russell should retain the direction of a movement of which such men as "Orator Hunt" and Burdett had been the exponents, appeared like trusting the first French Revolution to the Girondins. It was forgotten that the country had been passing through a prolonged political education which had prepared it for the crisis, that obvious reforms of all kinds had been only delayed till the war and its immediate consequences had passed away, and that the resort to brute force was out of place in a free country so long as constitutional means could be employed on the side of movement.

To sum up the steps which were necessary before the Reform Bill could become law, we begin with the dissolution of Parliament, which took place very shortly after the strongly
1830. Liberal Parliament of November 1830 had commenced its session. Of course this direct appeal to the country produced an overwhelming majority for Reform. There was nothing more to be done by the Lower House. The Upper House resolved that the time had come to interfere, and threw the bill out. Next came Lord Grey's resignation, and a state of political excitement throughout the country which exceeded anything known before or since in the present century, the Bristol Riots, the formation of new Liberal Clubs, the suspension of every other subject of interest in face of the one absorbing topic. The king, whose own sentiments had been honestly favourable to the movement, now took alarm from those about him; and, beginning to think it was another Mutiny of the Nore, sent for the one person on whom the hopes of society were founded in those days, the Duke of Wellington. But the Duke soon discovered that he had not only no chance whatever of forming a ministry, but that even the military were not to be relied upon, and that the next thing which would happen would be a revolution. With his usual patriotism he settled the question. On the one hand he advised the king to recall the Grey ministry, and not to take the violent step of swamping the House of Lords; on the other he used his immense personal influence, when the Bill again passed in the Lower House, to persuade the Peers to retire from the unequal contest. At the head of a hundred of them he marched out of the House with the same com-

posure as he would have shown in making a necessary retreat from a superior force of the enemy. The battle was over.

Of the Reform Bill itself it is in keeping with these Outlines to say only as much as this. It was a middle-class bill, depriving rank and wealth of the direct influence they had exercised through what were called the "rotten boroughs," which were now swept away; and a real representation of population was given to many unrepresented towns, which, as the borough franchise was fixed at £10, threw the towns generally into the hands of tradesmen and superior mechanics. The increased number of members given to the counties compensated the upper classes in some degree for the loss of the nomination boroughs; for the franchise was still practically in the hands of the farmers and landholders. The Government of the time being was the chief loser, as it could no longer, as of old, put its friends into Treasury, Admiralty, and other boroughs. It could, however, be only a transition Reform. The principles which carried it led further; but it lasted out the generation which passed it, and by that time political education had made great strides. We are not therefore called upon to decide whether this government by a trading democracy, limited by aristocratic checks, was better or worse than the composite government by the upper classes, limited by sundry democratic checks, to which it succeeded, but to mark the fact that the change was inevitable.

Perhaps we are entitled to sum up in this place what each of the three component parts of the British Constitution have done for the nation. A monarchical Constitution, before and after Parliaments arose, had many military successes and few defeats. Its greatest achievement was to carry the Reformation without civil war. An aristocratic Constitution founded the modern British empire, and made its sovereigns the arbiters of Europe and the world. The democratic Constitution has hitherto succeeded in the preservation and enlargement of the empire, and has gradually extended self-government in a form which may be said to satisfy all legitimate aspirations. It is to the extremely gradual character of these changes, the slow and deliberate reduction of anomalies and inequalities, that we owe the salvation of the social and political life of the British people. It is by this means that extremes have had time to rub off their angu-

larities, and dangerous projects to shade off into rational policy.

It was not long after the meeting of the Reformed Par-
1833. liament, in the beginning of 1833, that this sturdy good sense of the people began to show itself. There was an abundance of vigorous activity displayed in dealing with practical reforms, but there was a decided reaction from the extreme Radicalism which at such a time naturally came to the surface. Thus, by way of meeting O'Connell's cry for the Repeal of the Union, it was proposed to abolish the Church of Ireland, the tithes of which there was a very general refusal to pay; and the demand for further reform took with many the shape of an attack on property as such. These wild schemes lingered in the air, and Lord Grey, a model representative of the old Whigs, found himself hampered and attacked for resisting them. Disgusted with his
1834. allies and enfeebled by age, his resignation in 1834 was a great blow to the no longer united party; and a "Conservative," as distinct from a Tory, party began to rally round Peel, whose experience and abilities placed him practically at the head of the House of Commons long before he could muster a majority. Under his guidance the Tories talked no more of undoing what had been done, but frankly accepted the past, and only required that sweeping changes should not be pressed till they had been sufficiently debated. There was not, indeed, any very serious difference between the leaders of opposite parties, and this attitude of Liberal-Conservatism suited the king. He indeed believed that the reaction had made more progress than it really had. Lord Grey had in 1834 been succeeded as Prime Minister by Lord Melbourne, a statesman whose chief merit was expressed in his famous saying, "Cannot you leave it alone?"
1835. but in 1835 the king thought he might just as well have great men like Wellington and Peel at the head of affairs as Lord Melbourne; so, with some unconstitutional abruptness, he dismissed the Whigs, and called upon the Conservatives. The new Parliament proved he was not far wrong; but Peel could not yet command a majority, and Melbourne again came into office. Though it was not till 1841 that the Conservatives were able to place Peel at the head of the Government, he and his party assumed a constitutional place

as a powerful Opposition, and exercised a real influence as such on the course of events, though Lord John Russell led the House of Commons.

It was significant that the first use to which the Reformed Parliament, under Lord Althorp's leading, had put its new representative character was the restoration of order in Ireland. The Repeal agitation, following close upon Roman Catholic Emancipation, had let loose every species of disorder; and a strong Coercion Bill, scarcely opposed by any but O'Connell and his "tail," was almost immediately effective. It soon, however, came to be understood that the Irish problem was a much more complicated difficulty than mere Coercion Bills, or even the manipulation of Irish bishoprics, could solve. Public attention had not been called a day too soon to the subject. It is equally significant and honourable to the nation that order was no sooner restored at home than it applied itself to complete the other outlying task, which had been so long delayed by war and tumults. When the enemies of Great Britain have said their worst against her, they are forced to admit that the emanci- 1834.
pation of the West Indian slaves at a cost of twenty millions was a grand achievement. The attempt to indulge in a cheap philanthropy found little support. Before the eyes of the country had been opened by Wilberforce and his friends, slavery had not only been lawful, but defended by solemn treaties. Slave-owners must therefore be compensated from the public funds, and, regardless of consequences, they were. The illustrious Wilberforce lived to witness his triumph, and immediately afterwards died — a fit ending for a noble life, which was one long lesson to two generations.

Scarcely less important were the successful efforts of the new Parliament to accomplish the two great reforms which England itself required in order to remove pernicious abuses of long standing. The beneficent Poor Law of Elizabeth, by which a regulated substitute was provided for the irregular and much-abused aid afforded by monasteries to the poor, had gradually been converted into a system by which the labouring class was demoralised, and the whole object of a Poor Law perverted. Acting on the report of a Commission, the present Poor Law was carried, and its operations placed 1834.
under a Board of Commissioners. The improvement was

instantaneous, but by no means recognised by the labouring classes as such. It was their discontent, and in some respects just discontent, which had supplied the force by which Reform had been carried; and they now began to formulate demands, some of which time has sanctioned, but fortunately not till education had prepared the way. The other Reform is more particularly associated with Lord John Russell, who succeeded Lord Althorp as Leader of the
1835. House of Commons. The Municipal Reform Act, like the new Poor Law, was only a recurrence to true old English principles and practice, which had been pushed out of the way by the monarchical and aristocratic spirit of the dynasties which succeeded to the Plantagenets. The people now recovered the rights of the original "freemen," and the numerous corruptions which had made "corporations" a by-word, though defended by the stiffer Tories to the last, happily disappeared. Patent enough before, the Reform of Parliament had made these abuses untenable. Around the greater reforms revolved others of less importance; amongst other less-noticed ones, that of the Laws of Real and Personal Property. Everything, it was felt, might now be brought to the light.

The attempted reforms of the Church both in England and Ireland involved principles of a character with which the existing society was far less capable of dealing. Some of those most obviously necessary seemed to conflict with the sacredness of inheritance. The merging of ten Irish bishoprics into the remainder was taken by many High Churchmen to be a ruinous measure; but an excellent system of placing
1836. Church revenues in the hands of an Ecclesiastical Commission, though denounced, was evidently the only escape from a thousand difficulties; and it has ever since been gradually but surely removing the abuses of ages. Thus the principle of Appropriation clauses, which wrecked more than one administration, gradually passed out of sight, until revived in the case of Irish Church Disestablishment in 1869. Another practical reform of the last importance was the Tithe Com-
1836. mutation Act of 1836.

The alarm taken in consequence of the Irish Church measures had an important effect. It gave the signal for a combination amongst High Churchmen to strengthen the hold of

"Church principles" upon the nation. The first leader of the movement was Hugh James Rose of Cambridge, but it soon fell into Oxford hands, and produced, amongst other works, the 'Tracts for the Times.' The writers and their friends, men of remarkable goodness and ability, rapidly developed differences which ranged them in two sections—those who approved of the Reformation, and sought to revivify the Church on that basis; and those who disapproved of it, a sort of Nonjurors, many of whom, including Newman, their chief, "went over to Rome." He led the way in 1845. All this, however, was as yet only in the bud. 1833–1841.

The foreign affairs of this reign were chiefly in the hands of Lord Palmerston, Canning's pupil and successor, but a minister so much more addicted to interference in the internal concerns of other countries than his master, that his policy has in this respect formed rather a warning than an example. His chief success was not indeed open to this charge. For the supposed benefit of Europe, Belgium had been hardly treated by the great Powers at the Treaty of Vienna. Against its will it had been forced into union with Holland, and the Paris Revolution of 1830 made its rebellion against the Treaty inevitable. The Powers were of course resolved that it should not be annexed by France, and Palmerston shaped the issue of the negotiations by which its independence, under the rule of Prince Leopold, was established. This excellent Prince of Saxe Coburg had been for one brief year, as the husband of the Princess Charlotte, regarded with affection and hope by the English people; and he now improved his position by his marriage with Louis Philippe's daughter. Thus, once more—we may hope finally—was secured to the British Islands their vital policy of keeping the shores of the Low Countries in friendly and independent hands. With it survived also the obligation, emphasised by the advance of steam, to defend those shores if attacked. 1830.

The British and the French Governments further strengthened their connection, under Palmerston's guidance, by the adoption of an identical policy with regard to Spain and Portugal. The influence of the Holy Alliance had been strongly felt in both countries, and in both of them Absolutist members of the Royal Family were at the head of dangerous insurrections against the Constitutionalist Sovereigns whom

Great Britain and France had favoured. The Duke of Wellington had sternly discountenanced interference on either side; but the cause of Donna Maria, in whose favour her father, the Emperor of Brazil, had abdicated, became popular, and Palmerston allowed her friends to levy volunteers amongst the British people. These soon put down Dom Miguel, and after a prolonged struggle Don Carlos in Spain was forced to succumb to the forces of Christina and her "Legion" of
1840. foreigners, most of whom were British. Thus Palmerston was able to boast that he had balanced the Absolutist Alliance of the east, by the Constitutional Alliance of France and Britain, Spain and Portugal, in the west, of Europe. It was the only excuse for proceedings which were really indefensible; but there was this further to be said, that though the reaction against the Holy Alliance produced revolution, the defence of Liberal monarchies met revolution on its own ground and issued in peace and order.

1837. William IV.'s death would have been more severely felt if great hopes had not been entertained of his successor. As it was he was sincerely mourned. Queen Adelaide had taken care that the court should be exemplary, and the king had proved that he had inherited the business-like qualities of his House. He was thoroughly English like his father, showing many instances of generosity; and if he remembered his old friends a little too much, it was a venial fault.

CHAPTER XVIII.

QUEEN VICTORIA.—PART I.: 1837–1846 (SIR ROBERT PEEL).

THE circumstances of Queen Victoria's Accession, celebrated in poetry, prose, and painting, form a graceful idyl of which the nation is proud. Everything combined for her benefit, —her sound, domestic, and retired education, the singular accident that Lord Melbourne was free and willing to become her regular tutor in the business of government, and her

happy marriage with Prince Albert in 1840. Add to this her growing attachment to the great Duke, who was to her, in a beautiful paternal way, even more a friend than he had been to her uncles,—and we see that she was dowered with an environment of sympathy, support, good sense, and wisdom at the very outset of a career which required them all. It was, however, one thing to learn what the Constitution of her country was; it was another to discover, on each occasion as it arose, what was the constitutional course to pursue. There is a general agreement that the soundness of her teaching has been equalled by that of her practice. It is necessary to say as much as this, since the chief evidence of the sovereign's tact has been that she has influenced the history of her country without appearing to do so, and thus our Outlines will mention her but little in comparison with most of her predecessors on the throne. 1840.

There was a general desire in England that the opening of the reign should not be unnecessarily disturbed. The cry familiar to us in a work of fiction, "The young Queen and the old Constitution," exactly expressed the popular feeling; and to this Lord Melbourne owed the patience with which his feeble ministry was borne. The first serious difficulties of the reign came from the side of Canada, where the Reform Bill movement and the recent French Revolution had found inflammable materials ready for ignition. We have seen that the loyalty of the conquered French Canadians had been secured by the immediate grant of free institutions. Pitt had followed up this substantial boon in 1791 by a Constitution for each of the two provinces, well fitted for the initial stages of a Crown colony. Since that the immigration from England into Upper Canada had accentuated the natural differences between the French and English Canadians. The time had come for an increase of self-government suited to the growth of both peoples, and the Rebellion, which was almost confined to Lower or French Canada, precipitated the measure. It was never really serious, for there were no sufficient grounds for it; and it had been put down before the British line-of-battle ship, conveying the Coldstream Guards, arrived at Quebec in 1838. 1838.

Lord Durham was now sent out to report. His report was accepted, and put into operation. The two provinces

1840. were united into "the Province of Canada;" the Legislative Council was still composed of a small number of Crown nominees; the Legislative Assembly was elected in equal numbers from Upper and Lower Canada; the Executive Council consisted of eight members of the Legislature who were responsible to the Assembly. In this way the model of the British Constitution was as nearly as possible adopted; and the majority of the colonists could now carry their measures, subject only to the veto of the Governor or the Legislative Council. Such as the Constitution of Canada, now "the Dominion of Canada," was then established, it has substantially remained; and such it has become in Australia, New Zealand, the Cape, and in all the other colonies which have been sufficiently favoured and prepared by circumstances to receive it. Thus our present colonial system dates from the beginning of the present reign.

The next difficulty proceeded from the Levant. The cordial understanding with France displayed in the West, did not extend to the East. The colonisation of the Algerine territory in 1830 had revived the ambition of the French to restore their medieval predominance in the Mediterranean, and to balance by this means the great Asiatic position acquired by their ancient rival. Under their encouragement Mehemet Ali, the clever and unscrupulous Pasha of Egypt, had practically established his independence of Turkey. Taking advantage of the decrepit condition of the Sultan's government, he and his warlike son, Ibrahim Pasha, had been for some years employed in the conquest of Syria, and were only prevented from marching upon Constantinople by the attitude of Russia. In 1839, at the accession of the youthful Sultan Abdul Medjid, they were even able to possess themselves by treachery of the Turkish fleet. The Great Powers now interfered, but France resolutely held aloof. Palmerston, however, had the courage and the skill to make a joint Treaty without her, and to take the consequences of the war which, in the summer of 1840, was declared against Mehemet Ali. This exasperated M. Thiers, Louis Philippe's Prime Minister, representing perhaps the majority of the nation, but happily he was unable to persuade the experienced king to go to war with the British in support of so weak a cause.

Everything now depended on rapid and immediate success. If the coast-fortresses of Syria, supported by Ibrahim's troops, had been able to make any effective resistance to the British fleet, the French king would apparently have been forced to give way, and a European war would once more have impeded the progress of the world. Fortunately the plan of the campaign was well laid and promptly executed. With a few British marines and Turkish troops Commodore Napier disposed of Ibrahim's army; the smaller forts fell rapidly one after the other; and on November 3 the great fortress of St Jean d'Acre was taken by the whole combined fleet under Admiral Sir Robert Stopford, with no very severe loss. This was the critical event. It had been considered impregnable, and the guns were chiefly manned by Europeans. The capture was hastened by the explosion of the great magazine, and the evacuation of the place by the garrison took place a few hours later. The Duke of Wellington, in the House of Lords, declared it to be one of the greatest deeds of modern times. Mehemet Ali now submitted, evacuated Syria and Candia, gave back the Turkish fleet, and received his Pashalic of Egypt as hereditary in his family, but still under allegiance to Turkey. It may be reckoned a proof of Lord Palmerston's sagacity that this settlement has survived for half a century, during a series of troubles which have never ceased to harass the Levant. 1840.

The early part of the reign was distinguished by yet another settlement of long-vexed questions, though, indeed, a commencement had been made before it began. Ireland had at last been relieved of the dead weight which had clung to her political and social system ever since the battle of the Boyne. The "Protestant Ascendancy" came to an end in 1829, but it did not immediately occur to the English that the society which had grown up under that system would have to be altogether readjusted. The whole of the English and Scottish people were unanimous on the point that the Repeal of the Union could not, with safety to themselves, be admitted to question; but some of their statesmen began to perceive that six millions of Roman Catholics could hardly be brought into line with the one million of Protestants who had previously governed them, without inducing a chronic state of insurrection, and something very like chaos, un-

less some new and scientific system of administration were adopted.

Fortunately the Government had to their hand in Drummond, an officer of the Royal Engineers, a man whose talents had become conspicuous on that Ordnance Survey of the islands, the completion of which has been one of the minor glories of the present reign. To him as Under-Secretary for Ireland the task was committed; and, as his machinery still exists, it must be briefly summed up here under four heads, —a great extension of the system of stipendiary magistrates, a new organisation and an increased number of courts of petty session, a complete reorganisation of the constabulary, and a law adviser at the Castle in connection with the magistracy. Dublin Castle was the key to the whole system, which might be described as a centralisation of law for the purpose of enforcing equal justice for all religious persuasions;—a position not indeed intended to be permanent, but to last till faction was succeeded by the same law-abiding spirit as that which obtained in the larger island. Every abuse was to be rooted out, and Ireland was to be governed on English ideas until the difference between the people of the two islands should disappear. Meanwhile her material prosperity was to be developed by every means which art and science could suggest. Drummond lived but five years (1835–1840) to work out his programme, in full accord with the wishes of the Irish themselves; but his successors had to encounter numerous and unexpected difficulties in following his steps. No magician's wand could charm away the engrained anomalies left behind by centuries of English government, the form of which had been conditioned by the one simple question of public safety, and which had been forced to leave everything else to find its own place.

1835–1840.

Happily for the Irish people, the public attention which had been drawn to their wants, and the sympathetic public spirit displayed in England, produced good fruit in spite of many a storm; and before the great famine of 1846 demanded yet a fresh readjustment, much had been done, and in many respects on far more scientific lines than in England or Scotland. The tithes and temporalities of the Church of Ireland had been placed on a reasonable footing, parliamentary and municipal reform had been effected, and

the education of the lower classes established upon principles which were afterwards much disputed, but which it was generally desired should be fairly tried. Railroads, harbours, coast-navigation, river-works, and drainage, both general and local, changed the face of the land; capital was attracted to the country; the new Poor Law was creating a higher standard of self-respect, and removing the most common causes of complaint. The statistics of crime told the story of the general improvement.

Then came the great famine which tested the machinery of government to the utmost. What nothing but such a catastrophe could do was now effected. No amount of advice, no efforts of Government, could have persuaded the Irish lower classes that to rely upon the potato alone for food was to court destruction. Destruction came in the most severe form known to modern times. By death and emigration to America the population was reduced by more than two millions of people. Misery and despair, in spite of the immense efforts honestly and generously made to cope with the crisis, provoked once more the cry for Repeal of the Union; and the emigrants from this time forward carried with them a bitter spirit of hatred against the English which has reacted upon Ireland ever since. To the British Government, however, the consequences of the famine were only a call for redoubled exertions. The Poor Law was greatly enlarged, not without some immediate suffering; facilities for the sale of encumbered estates were created, which also did some harm along with much good; hospitals, asylums, and the new convict-system were established. Every Irish institution was reformed or remodelled. Material improvement soon began again to display itself; and until the Fenian Conspiracy, which proceeded from the United States of America, broke out in 1866, Ireland enjoyed one of its too rare seasons of comparative calm. In many respects it may well be doubted whether the progress of the larger island was not distanced by that of the smaller. 1846.

We return to the early years of the Queen's reign, and the great political struggle in England which characterised it, upon the question of the Corn Laws. This was indeed by no means a new question at her Accession; but the protection of home-grown corn by imposing severe duties upon all

that came from abroad had long been considered by all classes so natural and normal a state of things that serious efforts to overthrow the system were scarcely heard of till the time of the Reformed Parliament. When it once undertook to search out all such matters in their especial bearing upon the wellbeing of the labouring class the system was doomed. With Cobden and Bright, in 1839, the Repeal of the Corn Laws began to be a subject which made and unmade ministries. It was one of those questions which involved much more than appeared upon the surface, and it is a mistake to deal with its history as if the Corn Laws were a mere attempt to protect vested interests at the expense of the poor man's necessary food. On the contrary, the governing classes could hardly be expected to accept the Repeal till it was forced upon them. To statesmen the Repeal seemed to involve a direct descent of Great Britain from the position which had been built up during the past century; for when the food of the nation was dependent on foreign States, war would mean starvation. Every institution was based on the land, and what would become of that basis when agriculture was no longer profitable? The price of labour, they believed, would always adjust itself to the price of bread. To this it was replied that these arguments were worthless when a population had grown so much more numerous than its native food-supply could satisfy at moderate prices; that to keep up artificially the price of necessary food was contrary to the first laws of nature; and that if one consequence of the Repeal was to make statesmen pursue a peace-policy, so much the better. It was easy to see that these arguments would prevail, and that any evil consequences would have to be met on their own merits. The manufacturing interest declared itself more and more against the agricultural, and the "Manchester School," with Free Trade and Peace on its banner, became a moving power in politics.

The first great trial in strength, however, was all against the new doctrines. Sir Robert Peel drove the Whigs from office with a majority of ninety Protectionists, and thus emphasised the reaction which had been taking place since the Reform of Parliament. He had organised his party with great success, and the Melbourne ministry could not be sustained for ever either by the goodwill of the Crown or

the abilities of Palmerston as foreign minister. A half-measure on the Corn Laws, which Melbourne adopted by way of pleasing both parties, pleased no one, and he had to resign in 1841.

In order that we may not break the continuity of the subject, we may at once sum up Peel's administration as regards the Corn Laws. He came in on Protection; he went out, five years later, on Repeal. He had, as a member of a manufacturing family, held a position of his own, distinct from the agricultural interest; yet imagined that his great parliamentary talent and experience had made him absolutely necessary as its leader — a false position throughout. His policy was at first of much the same sort as that of the Whigs, one of half-measures; but the latter, having in 1846 announced a policy of total Repeal, and the Irish famine having made it necessary in that island, Peel gave up his unreal opposition, espoused the popular cause altogether, and resigned. No one could blame him for this. Lord George Bentinck and the rising statesman, Disraeli, had led with personal bitterness the phalanx of outraged Protectionists against their chief, but he made up his mind to defy them; and when Lord John Russell found that he was unable to form a ministry, Peel undertook to do so himself, in order to carry Repeal by the aid of his political opponents. This he succeeded in doing, but at the sacrifice of breaking up the party he had formed, and throwing back the balance of party government for several years. Both parties soon joined against him, and forced him from power. It was the end of his career (June 29, 1846). Lord John Russell now formed 1846.
the second great Whig Government of the reign, in which Peel's immediate followers, the "Peelites," headed by Mr Gladstone, assisted Lord John against the discomfited Protectionists.

The first of the Afghan wars and the first of the Chinese wars were the other great events which signalised the opening of the reign. They are both to be referred to Palmerston's foreign policy. India had long recovered from the plague of the Mahratta hordes, and the mere fact of the recovery had demonstrated that the English rule could not remain within the limits at which it had been fixed by Cornwallis and Wellesley, or even by Lords Hastings

and Amherst, under the last of whom a great part of Burmah was annexed. One native State after another necessarily fell under the control of the one Power which exhibited strength, and acted with justice and mercy. The system of "Subsidiary Native States" was found in practice to be the natural and effective way of governing India, and though the present area covered by such States is now comparatively small, it still subsists. But no sooner was the dominion of the British in India placed on a secure and durable footing than a fresh alarm was given by the progress of the Russians in Central Asia, and by their intrigues both with Persia and Afghanistan. Ignorance of the people and of the country led the British into deplorable mistakes in
1840–1843. their first dealings with the Afghans, and between 1840 and 1843 the British troops were subjected to the most disastrous campaign they have known in modern times. They were avenged by Generals Nott and Pollock; and then, for the time, the British retired from that country.

The China War was not accompanied by any disaster, but its origin in the determination of the British Government to force the opium-trade on an unwilling people will always be a stain on its record. Not that this was the only cause of the war; nor when the Chinese took on themselves to insult and injure the British residents was there any difference of opinion between Whigs and Conservatives as to the necessity of war. Under Admiral Sir William Parker and General Sir Hugh Gough it was soon concluded; a much-needed lesson was read to the Chinese, who had always hitherto professed to consider Europeans as barbarians; and a permanent
1842. position was established by the Treaty of Nankin in 1842. Hong-Kong was ceded to Great Britain, and five "Treaty-ports" were assigned for her commerce — Canton, Amoy, Foochow, Ningpo, and Shanghai. From that time forward the relations between China and Great Britain have been much improved, though not without a still more serious war; and Hong-Kong has become, in the course of half a century, one of the greatest cities in the British empire.

CHAPTER XIX

QUEEN VICTORIA.—PART II.: 1846–1865 (LORD PALMERSTON).

THE Repeal of the Corn Laws was so great an event that we have treated it as defining a period. The proper way to regard it is as a necessary feature in the process of a virtually new population settling down after the great war in the midst of the old. The Duke of Wellington considered it in this light. He could not himself have advocated the measure, but he supported Sir Robert Peel. It was a surrender, but, like the measures of 1828-1832, he thought the time had come for surrender, and the country must face the consequences. One of the immediate consequences, as we have seen, was the breaking up of the two historic parties, now beginning to be called "Conservative" and "Liberal," into three. Sir Robert Peel had been not only a great minister in the sense of administration and oratory, the first man in either House, the representative in domestic politics of Pitt and Canning, the only man who could have rallied, as he did, the wreck of the Tory party after its crushing defeat in the two previous reigns; he was more than this. His moral and religious character, his intellectual breadth and culture, and his sympathy with the middle and lower classes, formed around him a school, a band of personal friends who stood manfully by him when he was deserted and denounced by those who had placed him in power, and who looked upon themselves as having been shamefully betrayed. This view of his conduct was inevitable, and great excuses must be made for the violence of the Protectionist leaders. On the other hand, Peel had made his deliberate choice, and had the consolation of persuading himself and being thought by many to have acted the part of a patriot.

The Peelites, of whom Mr Gladstone was the chief, were more important for their talents and character than for their numbers; but they were powerful enough to control the political situation. They had much in common with the Conservatives, but they gravitated more and more towards Liberalism. The Premiership of Peel had been brilliant on

the side with which they were most identified, and which the Liberals now represented. He had introduced the principles of Free Trade into many departments of commerce before he openly surrendered the Corn Laws. He had organised the police; he had honestly grappled with the difficulties presented by the Irish problem, in connection with which, indeed, he had a special experience and knowledge; he had done something to reduce the National Debt, and for the security of the banking system; even those who clamoured against his Income-Tax found themselves unable to dispense with it. In short, like Pitt at the end of a similar war-period, he had been the representative of the nation in adapting itself to its new requirements, and as such must always stand high amongst British statesmen. It must, however, be said that his treatment of the Conservatives not only clouded his latter years, but the formation of the third party led the country into great misfortunes. To the anomalous position of parties may be traced the enfeebled state of the Government under which the country drifted into the Russian War of 1854. Under a system of three parties acting independently, the check of a powerful Opposition disappears; mere intellectual eminence, which is so often mistaken for possession of the governing faculty, finds its way to the front; and the nation only discovers its mistake when the consequences are irreparable. But, after all, it is by going wrong that, for the most part, both States and individuals learn to go right.

The great wars in India which characterised Peel's Premiership may reasonably, like his domestic policy, be regarded as the necessary consequence of the growth of the empire. The spectacle of the hitherto invincible British evacuating Afghanistan, even though their disasters were avenged, could not but affect the warlike races of North India who had witnessed the catastrophe. The conquest of Scinde by the veteran Sir
1843. Charles Napier in 1843 was for the moment sufficient to check the movement which began to show itself, especially as it was followed almost immediately by Sir Hugh Gough's conquest of Gwalior. It was quite necessary in both cases, from the proximity of each people to the settled provinces, that the British authority should be exerted; but matters could not stop there. In two years' time the only army which still threatened the British power broke loose from

native government, and deliberately prepared to measure itself with that of the foreign lords of India. The Sikhs were exceedingly formidable by their courage, discipline, numbers, and military equipment; but Sir Hugh Gough and his little army, aided by the military experience of Sir Henry Hardinge, the Governor-General, who nobly placed himself under Gough's command, and by the gallant co-operation of Sir Harry Smith — all of them Peninsular veterans — were too much for them. The fine battles of Moodkee, Ferozeshah, Aliwal, and Sobraon (the last of which took place on February 10, 1846), forced the Sikhs to submission, and extended the British frontier. The settlement of the Punjâb, which was effected soon afterwards, first brought into prominence one of the great names for ever to be associated with the British rule in India. It was Henry Lawrence who laid the foundations of the Government of the Punjâb, which his brother John, afterwards Lord Lawrence, so effectively organised. 1846.

These victories gilded the close of Peel's ministry. On the other hand, the conduct of Louis Philippe and his minister, M. Guizot, from whom something better might have been expected, seriously endangered what had long been called the *entente cordiale* between the two countries. The old ambition of the French to "abolish the Pyrenees" found expression once more in the underhand intrigues which brought about the "Spanish Marriages." As these arrangements were not only made in bad faith, but were iniquitous in themselves, they had something to do with the loss of respect which cost the French king his throne in 1848.

The name of Peel, who died in 1850, is on the whole the most representative of the period passed in review; that of Palmerston may serve to represent the second part of the reign—*i.e.*, from 1846 to 1865. If we were indeed to group the course of events around the foreign policy of the Government, there would be no place for any one else but Palmerston, even from the beginning of the reign; but in the early part domestic questions predominated, and Palmerston, through good report and evil report, often mistaken, yet more clearly seeing his way than any one else, stands out in advance of all his peers, and remains at their head till his death. Thus, though Lord John Russell was Premier from 1846 to 1852, and Lord Derby for a few months in 1852,

and again in 1858-1859, Palmerston's informing spirit may for the most part be traced. Even during the time when the Crimean War was waged under Lord Aberdeen's short and disastrous Government, it was felt that things would have been very different had Palmerston been Premier. After his time domestic subjects once more take the lead, and we witness the newly organised Great and Greater Britain of to-day under the successive management of Gladstone, Disraeli, and Lord Salisbury.

Lord Palmerston's great position was chiefly due to his lifelong association with Canning, and his inheritance of Canning's foreign policy. He had strong but not inconsistent sympathies with both Whigs and Tories, which conciliated the latter even while they were opposing him as an associated member of their opponents' government. But no one, however he might condemn, could ever mistake his principles of foreign policy. They were formed in great times and under great men, and may be stated very simply in the following words: that as long as he lived, the position of his country should not be lowered. In this sense his place as the representative of Great Britain became even more
1852. conspicuous after the death of the great Duke in 1852. The awe which the arbiter of Europe inspired in the breasts of foreigners, even in old age, made him a great power up to the last: it was not altogether unlike the influence of the latter years of Frederick the Great. In Palmerston men felt that, under the garb of the civilian statesman, there beat the same British heart which had animated Nelson and Wellington. There might be too much intermeddling, too much display, too much independent action; but the country trusted their leader, and he pulled them through.

Perhaps, as we have connected the names of Palmerston and the Duke, this may be the place to remark on their common service in placing their country in a state of defence suited to their times. It required the lapse of more than one generation to dispel the illusion that the British empire, once formed, would keep itself together without any further trouble. The enormous sacrifices which it had cost were supposed to guarantee it for ever. How long these absurd ideas would, in spite of the Duke's warnings, have prevailed, had not the progress of steam, iron-built ships, and long-

range artillery aroused the world, no one can say; but with the fortification of the great English arsenals, and with the institution of the Volunteers, which were very much due to Palmerston,—not a little assisted by the wise influences of the Queen and Prince Consort,—began a new era of military and naval reform, by no means yet complete, though often checked by ignorance or party spirit.

Never for a moment swerving from what has been called his policy of "civis Romanus," the claim of respect for the imperial position of his country, Palmerston was equally pertinacious in the resolution to nurse the liberal aspirations of the European peoples as a counterpoise to the incessant attempts of the despotic Powers to bolster up the principles of the "Holy Alliance."

His talents had full scope when the third French Revolution broke out in 1848, and once more, as of old, set Europe on fire. Most of the nations of the Continent had, however, by this time arrived at something more like a balance of political parties than formerly, and the influence of constitutional England was very generally welcomed. It was well represented by Palmerston. Nowhere was he more useful than in Italy. To the liberation of that peninsula from the power of Austria the people of England had transferred the enthusiasm which they had felt for Greece; but the minister's encouragement of Italian patriotism was kept within rational bounds. It was not for Great Britain to destroy the settlement which she had been concerned in effecting, but in attempting to mediate between the contending parties, Palmerston laid the foundation of the work which was reserved for Cavour, Victor Emmanuel, Louis Napoleon, and Garibaldi. 1848.

It was no doubt well that a country which had been the scene of such a series of convulsions, and had remained for so many centuries a "geographical expression," should not receive its charter of unity and freedom all at once. It required many years of patriotic effort and persistent patience to teach the Italians who were their true friends, and who were lending assistance for merely ambitious and selfish objects. But in 1861 the great cause was at last won; Victor Emmanuel became King of Italy, and the first Italian Parliament met at Turin. Italy had become one of 1861.

the "Great Powers." The Italian policy of the Treaty of Vienna, however necessary for the time, had ceased to be useful, and it passed away. Europe received one more guarantee of order and concerted government which might be expected to lessen the chances of war.

Great Britain had indeed enough to occupy all her energies without unnecessary interference with the Continent. It was now that the great Indian questions, which had been waiting for solution ever since the Afghan War of 1840, the conquest of Scinde by Sir Charles Napier which ensued upon it, and the first war with the Sikhs, were brought to a point by the action of Lord Dalhousie. He was Governor-General from 1848 to 1856, and proved himself a ruler of the same type as Clive, Warren Hastings, Wellesley, and Lord Hastings. Opinions still differ as to the methods by which the native "Protected States" were gradually absorbed under British direct government; but the change could not have been very long delayed. The corruption, oppression, waste, and general viciousness which they displayed were intolerable by the side of the well-ordered British States, and full of danger; but it may well be held that if the process had been more gradual, native opinion more consulted, and native rights more respected, the terrible Mutiny which shook the fabric to its foundations might not have taken place. The central grievance was the annexation of Oude, and it was from that dangerous quarter that the troubles chiefly came.

Fortunately for the fate of British rule in India, a second war with the brave soldiers of the Punjâb had been waged and concluded some years before the Mutiny. These troops, well equipped and led, had once more stepped to the front, and undeterred by their former defeats, once more challenged the British to fight for their eastern empire; nor had they been finally subdued till three of the fiercest combats India has ever witnessed had taken place. The gravest disasters
1849. seemed to be impending, but Gough's last victory at Goojerat made amends for serious errors committed at Ramnuggur and Chillianwalla; and the able organisation of the conquered provinces by the Lawrences and others, soon turned these fine soldiers into friendly and trustworthy subjects. This
1857. result was arrived at just in time. The Mutiny of the Sepoys was a far more serious crisis than the Sikh wars, and the

alarm it caused might be compared with what the English had experienced during the Mutiny of the Nore. No one can say how long it would have taken to quell it if the Sikhs had not been available, but it was owing to their opportune aid that it was crushed before it had time to establish its superiority.

The Mutiny may be considered as the fourth wave of military opposition from the races of North India which had to be surmounted before the British could reckon themselves the real rulers of the whole peninsula. These waves had surged up in the west, and moved steadily on to the east. The rising of the Afghans, of the Beloochees of Scinde, and of the Sikhs had been each in turn put down, and now the drilled Sepoys of the central and easterly parts of North India made the last and most desperate stand of all against the Power which had hitherto proved invincible. Would it be invincible when it could command only a handful of European troops against the native soldiers who had fought their battles, learnt under them the art of war, and might succeed in carrying off the whole of their military stores? They believed that they had only to organise the revolt, to rise simultaneously, and to crush the few Europeans, who were scattered over an immense territory, before any defence could be made. These Outlines cannot of course trace all the causes of a deeply laid conspiracy, to which religious superstition supplied the igniting spark. The story of those dreadful months has been often told, and will never be forgotten. The names of Henry Lawrence and Havelock, of Outram and Nicholson, of Neill and Rose, of Lord Lawrence and Lord Clyde, became and will remain household words; but these were only the conspicuous leaders of equally brave men. Then was shown what heroism might yet be found in the British race, as its men and its women, its civilians as well as its soldiers, stood at bay in twos and threes and tens and twenties against odds which were far beyond all reckoning. Then, from the walls of Lucknow and Delhi was sent back 1858
the proud reply to those who had dared to assert that the career of the British had been played out, and that the soldiers of Wellington had left no successors.

It would have been well had the "Berserker fury," once aroused, restrained itself in time to escape the charge of cruel

retaliation; but the spirit of vengeance was soon controlled. The restoration of order was substantially accompanied by charitable allowance for misguidance; but the opportunity was wisely seized by the British Government to place the affairs of India on a new footing. The East India Company could no longer be trusted to deal with such immense interests. There can be no better device than a chartered Company for opening out, under the general control of the Home Government, new countries; but it has its limits, and it was high time that this great historical Corporation should be dissolved. The Queen became Empress of India, the
1858. Governor-General her Viceroy; and the affairs of India were passed over to a special Secretary of State, assisted by an Indian Council. Reforms of every kind have been progressing ever since, and there is no better governed people on the face of the earth than the 200,000,000 of British subjects who inhabit the great country where, in the time of Queen Elizabeth, a few dozen English merchants were allowed to form their settlement.

Additions have been necessarily made to this vast empire as circumstances have developed, made in each case with undisguised reluctance, but in obedience to the law which governs the relations of barbarous States in contact with civilisation. The annexation of the Burmese empire, commenced in 1825 and completed in 1886, was the chief of these additions, every step of which illustrates the above remark. The case of China was different. The impulse given to Indian commerce, the deliverance of the Straits of Malacca from the ever-recurring plague of Malay piracy, with the consequent growth of Singapore, and the increasing trade at the Treaty-ports of China itself, led to serious difficulties with that unwieldy empire. They were perhaps unavoidable, but once more the *casus belli* was of an unsatisfactory kind. Lord Palmerston's policy would be unfairly judged if the seizure of the Arrow, which brought on the war, were to be treated as the only subject in dispute. It was impossible that the heirs of a long-descended, though stationary and effete civilisation, who only desired to be let alone, should accept without disgust the relations with Europe which had been forced upon them at the cannon's mouth. It is also impossible to withhold our sympathy with the national in-

stincts of the Chinese; but in acquiring a footing on their shores, and demanding that it should be respected, the English and French, who made common cause in this second war, were obeying the law by which the various peoples of the world have made progress. The settlers find some who are glad to profit by welcoming them; the native authorities, directly or indirectly, gain some benefit; rights and compacts spring up; the old native jealousy is again excited by the attempts of the settlers to obtain further advantages; the natives repent of having made the concessions which led to these attempts, and would be glad to recall them. It is too late. The customs and precedents of generations cannot be brushed away; the aggrieved foreigners call in the forces of their own land; they are sure to establish their position more strongly than ever; and the independence of the old inhabitants crumbles away in the process.

Something of this sort has happened in India, and is happening in China, whose best defence, like that of Turkey, lies in the jealousy entertained by the European nations of one another. The war which began with that vast empire in 1858, and was not actually concluded till 1860, was so much opposed in Parliament on abstract moral grounds that Palmerston found himself obliged to appeal to the country; but the response was entirely in his favour, and his power was insured for the rest of his life. The Peace of Tientsin secured the position of the commercial settlers at the Treaty-ports and the establishment of European embassies at Peking; but this last provision was studiously evaded, and when the combined forces which had determined to enforce it attacked the forts on the Peiho, they were beaten back with loss. This issued, in 1860, in a much more determined effort, and the burning of the emperor's magnificent summer-palace. Resistance ceased; and the result was not only the confirmation of the Treaty of Tientsin, but that city, lying close to Peking, and accessible by the Peiho (when it is not frozen over), became itself a Treaty-port. 1858. 1860.

As a set-off, however, against these wars and desolations, and the enfeeblement of native authority thus produced, must be reckoned the gradual but sure introduction of Western civilisation. It is accompanied no doubt too often by Western vices, but on the whole it is an exchange much for

the better. Religion and philanthropy make their way by the agency of self-sacrificing missionaries; a superior public opinion is formed; prejudices slowly disappear under persistent education; the worst abominations of heathendom receive their death-blow; and the ways are laid for the reception of one community after another into the common fellowship which the nations of Europe have been privileged to form amongst themselves.

CHAPTER XX.

QUEEN VICTORIA.—PART III.: 1846–1865 (LORD PALMERSTON—*continued*).

In order to preserve a continuous view of Indian history, we have passed over the Crimean War, which immediately preceded the Mutiny. It was the most important event which had occurred in British affairs since the Peace of Vienna, or which has occurred up to the present time. We have seen that the Government was by no means at its best just when its fullest strength was required. The Conservatives were left by Peel's desertion too weak to do effective duty as an Opposition, and the combination of Whigs, Peelites, and Radicals which Lord Aberdeen led was only in appearance strong. No particular strength seemed to be needful. The horizon was unclouded in 1851 and 1852, but the storm was really about to break. There were, however, some ominous coincidences, which soon showed their significance. We have noticed the effect of the great Duke's death in
1852. 1852. It was immediately followed by Louis Napoleon's *coup d'état*, and the close alliance between the new French Emperor and Great Britain.

Just at this time the Czar Nicholas, whose impatience at the continued existence of the Turkish empire, the "sick man," could no longer be restrained, began to unfold his designs to the British Government. Unfortunately that Government failed to speak plainly, and indeed practically

encouraged him. The quarrel about the "Holy Places" at Jerusalem, paltry as it appeared, opened out all the smothered antipathies between the Greek and Latin Churches. The new Napoleon felt himself bound to represent Napoleonic ideas; and before the British people had grasped the fact that they were drifting, under incompetent leaders, into a European war, they found themselves in a position from which they could not retreat. Want of decision was not Lord Palmerston's defect; the mistakes both of the "drifting" and of the conduct of the war were plainly attributable to the incongruous composition of a Cabinet, which might possibly have governed the country in ordinary times. A single will, or at least ministerial cohesion, were required for the emergency, and "all the talents," as said of a former Coalition, were employed in pulling the machine of State in different directions. In curbing the ambition of Russia, when once embarked in war, their policy did indeed represent the national will; and of their desire to act cordially with France, when once embarked on a common enterprise, there was no complaint. It was the errors of diplomacy and administration which disgraced the Government, and forced the nation to depose it from power.

Before that happened a painful chapter had been added to English history. Failing to perceive that resistance to the Russian movement could only be immediately effective if it proceeded from united Europe, war (in March 1854) was too precipitately declared. Almost every possible mistake was made; and as usually happens under such circumstances, the so-called accidents of war fell heavily upon the Government. The joint operation with the French, undertaken in the most loyal spirit on both sides, turned out much as such operations usually do. The defects of organisation which British armies have always shown at the beginning of campaigns proved to be rather worse than ever. The general, Lord Raglan, admirable in some respects, was scarcely fitted for so arduous a task; opportunities were lost, errors persisted in, and the want of a master-mind either in the Cabinet or the field exposed the army to undeserved criticism. What did remain after all was the indomitable courage of that army, and its almost superhuman fortitude under disasters such as have seldom tried any body of men. Those who could look below

1854.

the surface might see that there was no ground for despair, and the exposure of the causes of so many failures soon began to work the remedy which is provided by the Constitution. Such results were not what the people of England meant that a representative Government should produce.

1855. Early in 1855 Lord Aberdeen's Cabinet was forced to resign, and Lord Palmerston, who, as Home Secretary, had not been so directly concerned in the war as others, and who fairly represented, in spite of occasional errors, the old British ideas which were prevalent in his youth, became Prime Minister. Mr Roebuck's Committee of Inquiry into the causes of the disasters did some good, but the change which now took place in every department of the public service was the consequence of renewed vigour at headquarters, and a wholesome desire to recover the goodwill of the nation. On September 8 Sebastopol fell at last, and the nations of the Continent were desirous of peace; while the resources of Great Britain, now properly applied, enabled her to take a position of her own, one of readiness to continue the war if Russia refused to grant adequate terms. On the whole, the

1856. terms were satisfactory, and may be considered as at least a step towards that European concert which has long been, and always ought to be, the ideal of statesmen. The neutrality of the Black Sea, and the formal inclusion of Turkey within the European circle of States, were the principal provisions, and the position of Wallachia and Moldavia, as independent States under Turkish suzerainty, being solemnly ratified, formed the example which has been so happily followed in later times.

For the first time, also, Great Britain was able to contemplate her own withdrawal from a position which she had inherited, and had refused to relinquish at the bidding of "Armed Neutralities" or of her own American offspring. But also for the first time a European concert was formed, the members of which could negotiate on equal terms by sea as well as by land. The condition of the world had changed, and the modes of sea-warfare had changed. The claims of past generations had become antiquated, and while Great Britain relinquished her general Right of Search, "contraband of war" alone was to be exempted in future from the protection of a neutral flag.

On Palmerston, who thus figured in his old age as the champion and representative of his country, fell the burden of carrying her through the Indian Mutiny and the contest with China already noticed. Here also was felt the value of confidence in Government. He fell however for a few months from his place through a circumstance which no one could have foreseen. The country had scarcely emerged out of her Eastern difficulties when the French alliance was seriously strained by the refusal of England to accept responsibility for sheltering an assassin who attempted the life of the French Emperor. There was no doubt that the remonstrances were substantially justifiable, but they were accompanied with insulting circumstances, and in the Premier's anxiety to support an alliance for which he had been largely responsible, his method of dealing with them failed to satisfy the country. Once more the nation refused to submit to the dictation of even its favourite, and he had to make way for Lord Derby and Mr Disraeli in February 1858. The Queen and Prince Albert were personally the chief means of restoring those friendly relations with the French which had become during the preceding half-century as marked a feature of British political and social life as the ancient hostility. 1858.

This second administration of Lord Derby and Mr Disraeli had, though short, the effect of consolidating the Conservative party. It could not yet command a majority, but it once more began to exercise a decided influence on the course of politics. The Whig majority soon recalled Lord Palmerston, who held the reins for the rest of his life, but only because his vast experience had convinced him that the country required to be let alone after the excitements and troubles of the previous twenty years. The Conservatives were satisfied with his leadership; the Whigs could not in decency repudiate it; and the Radicals waited for better times. Their attempts at a further development of the Reform Acts excited but a languid interest; and yet there was a general feeling that the representation of the people was not satisfactory. The Household Suffrage, carried in 1867 by Disraeli, expressed that conviction, and the Redistribution of Seats by Mr Gladstone and Lord Salisbury in 1884 happily completed the process.

The last of Palmerston's great services was not the least. It fell to him to steer the ship of the State through the troubled waters caused by the storm of the great American Civil War. British opinion was so much divided between the hatred of slavery, which lay at the root of the cause of the Northern States, and sympathy with the spirit of independence shown by the South, that the country was only kept from taking sides by the confidence felt in the Govern-
1862. ment. At the same time the Premier's decisive action in the "Trent" affair thoroughly represented the resolution of the people,—rather to go to war with the stronger of the two belligerents, than submit to a deliberate insult which admitted of no explanation. That was in exact accordance with the numerous precedents afforded by her history. Some credit must also be given to Palmerston for supporting the financial measures of Mr Gladstone, his brilliant Chancellor of the Exchequer.

It is not so easy to assign his due place to Palmerston in the abortive negotiations which did so little credit to England
1864. in the cases of Denmark and of the Poles. A great statesman had now begun to influence the counsels of central Europe, and in the face of Bismarck's aggressive policy, the bluster of Lord Russell, the English Foreign Minister, was contemptible unless it could be followed up. The policy of advice was so much in accordance with Palmerston's own earlier career that he may have shrunk from efficiently controlling his subordinate; but his intimate knowledge of the change which had come over Europe should have taught him that threats, without preparations for war and unsupported by alliances, were worse than useless. Great Britain was felt to be sufficiently engaged in the little but necessary wars with China and Japan, and the first Ashantee war, to employ her energies and restrain her interference, so long as her own interests were not openly threatened on the Continent. And this principle has prevailed with Palmerston's successors.

The policy of Non-Interference may appear to contrast with the doctrine of Balance of Power which was openly avowed as the ground of action in the previous centuries. But it is not really so. The necessity for the combination of peoples, under British leading, against a Philip II., a

Louis XIV., and a Napoleon was caused by the danger to British interests, as regards commerce, religion, and national security. Such necessity may arise again, but the common action of European Powers will have to be proved an absolute failure before Great Britain plunges into another of her great European wars. Such questions have already come before Lord Palmerston's successors, but they are too nearly concerned with what we call party politics to make it desirable that they should be dealt with in these Commentaries.

The immense growth of popular education which had taken place since the resettlement of the country after the Napoleonic war gave a fair promise that the movements above described of a democratic nature might be carried without imperilling the old institutions. The "Charity Schools" established here and there by private munificence had given place to the "National Schools" of the Church of England planted in every parish; the Nonconformists were not inactive; and the country was fast ripening for the great Education Act of Mr Forster, which, in 1871, organised the present comprehensive system. The public press passed through a corresponding development. Respectable cheap papers were found to pay, and the illiterate classes learnt gradually to understand the Constitution, and to some extent the history, of their nation. The enormous growth of literature of all kinds has been indeed one of the chief characteristics of the nineteenth century. That it has not brought to the front many competitors for the place occupied by the giants of past times seems attributable to a sort of law which connects the appearance of great names with the upheaval of the national strata, so to speak, such as was taking place in the reigns of Elizabeth, of Anne, and of George III. The diffusion of literature is unfavourable to the growth of individual eminence; but the loss is far more than balanced by the gains.

Philanthropical efforts to better the condition of the poor have attended the progress of education and literature. A population which had increased threefold since the Peace, only slightly thinned by annual emigration, and changed by the desertion of the rural villages for the towns and the mining districts, was found to require new legislation, as well as an abundance of voluntary agency, to deal with it.

Lord Shaftesbury's name will always stand pre-eminent for work of the former kind, and not a little of the latter. Against the persistent opposition of the leading manufacturers, he rescued the women and children from something akin to slavery, and, like Howard and Wilberforce, turned the indifference of the upper classes into an active interest. A host of followers have sprung up, and bit by bit one foul spot after another has been washed out of the national robes; but much remains to be done.

The agents in the process have been almost exclusively supplied by the awakened religious influences of the times. In the production of these agents the Church of England has taken the leading part. We last noticed its history in relation to the Tractarian movement, which took shape in the fourth decade of the century. The impulse of that movement, though it brought into conflict the different forms of Church opinion, was felt far and near. The Universities, as in previous times, became the focus and the centre of diffusion for these influences, which the University-bred clergy carried into their parishes. An increase of earnestness became palpable, and a new sort of bishops, of whom Blomfield and Samuel Wilberforce were the leaders and types, organised the growing zeal of their clergy and laity. New churches and schools sprang up as if by magic, not altogether unlike the movement of the Normans after the Conquest, though the architectural model most usually adopted was the "Early English," which had also been a period of church-building revival.

This excellent result of the movement has left a broad and conspicuous mark, while the mistaken medievalism in doctrine and ritual which became associated with it had not, at the period when our history closes, fully developed itself. The organisation of Church opinion by the revival of Convocation in 1852 (still a defective and incomplete organisation), by the system of annual Church Congresses in 1862, and very soon afterwards by the adoption of Diocesan Conferences, propagated improvements of many kinds, and pushed them forward in the remotest parts of the island; while at the same time, though extreme opinions naturally made their way, the prevailing spirit of English churchmanship came to be, through this public action, of

a wholesome kind, and loyal to the Via Media of the Reformation. The other schools of thought and doctrine were inferior in extent and vigour to that which was generally designated "High Church," but their rivalry was not without its advantages. The "District Visitor," the "Deaconess," and the "Sister" vied with each other in the noble labour of bringing the poor into a better and happier condition, a task of Hercules which even yet appears to be "never-ending, still beginning." The movement, in fact, began too late to cope successfully with the semi-heathenism into which a large proportion of the lower classes had been suffered to fall; and the problem is still before the England of to-day —before the Nonconformists, who have taken a noble share in the work, as well as the Church.

But as our period closes so soon after the death (in 1861) of one who was not a little concerned in the social progress of the nation, he must find a place here. The early death of the Prince Consort cut him off in the midst of numerous plans for the elevation and culture of the country of his adoption, the impulse of which has never been lost. His private virtues and benevolent sagacity were well known, and taught the people to mourn his loss; but it was not till the publication of his 'Life' that the knowledge of his usefulness to the public became, as it were, national property. Then it was seen that his influence both in domestic and foreign politics had been not only patriotic, but absolutely wise, and it was felt by those who valued the British Constitution that the position of the Crown in the new democratic England, bursting into life and activity in every form, had been adequately strengthened to suit the times by the genius of a royal pair upon the throne, united in laborious efforts for the good of their people. 1861.

To recount the numerous material advances of the country up to the period at which these chapters close would be out of keeping with the rest. Nor can we do more than mention the progress of Canada, Australia, South Africa, and the rest of the colonies of Great Britain, which, as long as the reign of the political economist lasted, were left alone and treated rather as encumbrances than otherwise. A very different view has prevailed since the middle of the present reign, and the persistent efforts to devise schemes by which they may

be united amongst themselves and to the mother country still give some hope that the error may be repaired. The time may not be far distant when it may become vital to their existence as well as to that of Great Britain that at every point where their mutual interests touch one another throughout the world a united front should be offered to hostile attacks, and to still more dangerous combinations not professedly hostile. It would be expecting too much of human nature if we supposed that the old jealousies which made men rejoice at the destruction of each colonial empire in turn — Venetian, Spanish, Portuguese, and Dutch — are likely to become extinct.

What is it that gives a hope of greater permanence for the British empire? The preceding Commentaries on its history suggest an answer. Never yet has a mixed government, in which the monarchy, the aristocracy, and the democracy are properly blended, been intrusted with the task of impregnating the world with its political principles. Never before has the incorporation of the religious element with the powers of the State, freed from the corruptions which tended to make it mischievous, had the opportunity of exhibiting its usefulness. Never yet have the profits of trade and commerce been shared amongst so many people, instead of being the degrading source of selfish opulence to a few. Never yet has such a boundless and varied field been open to adventure for the more gallant spirits which were accustomed in past times to find a vent in ever-recurring wars. Never yet has a nation shown such recuperative power after disasters, such a steady resolution to search out the causes of failure and make the necessary reforms, such sagacity in working those reforms into the texture of the old fabric, such a desire to preserve its inheritance if the machinery of government can only be made to do its appointed work; and it may be added, such a stern determination to get rid of the appointed agents for performing that work if they obstinately refuse to do their duty.

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